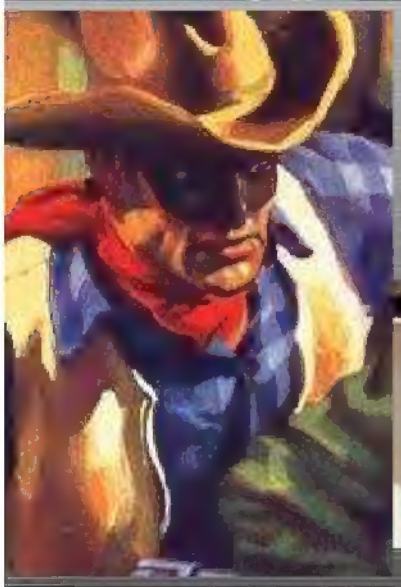
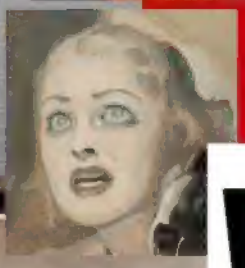
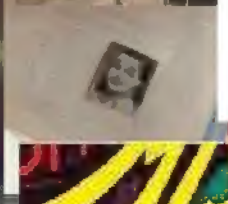
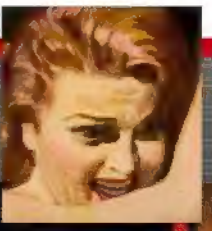
The Art Of Hugh Joseph WARD









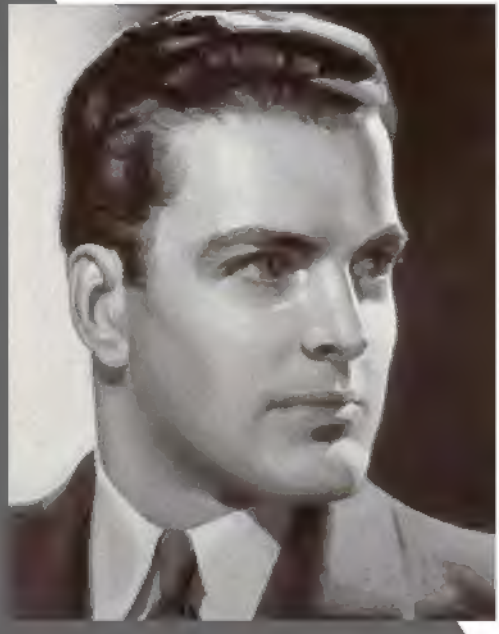
Hugh Joseph Ward was born March 8, 1909 in Philadelphia, PA.

His parents were Mary and Charles A. Ward. His father worked for the city as a letter carrier. Hugh was the youngest of six children in an Irish Catholic family. There were five sons and one daughter. Two other children were also born, but they died in infancy. The family lived at 1922 South 11th Street in Philadelphia for ten years but in 1919, when the father was hired as a stevedore at a shipping company, they moved to 2036 13th Street. "Hughie" had four years of Parochial high school.

H. J. WARD

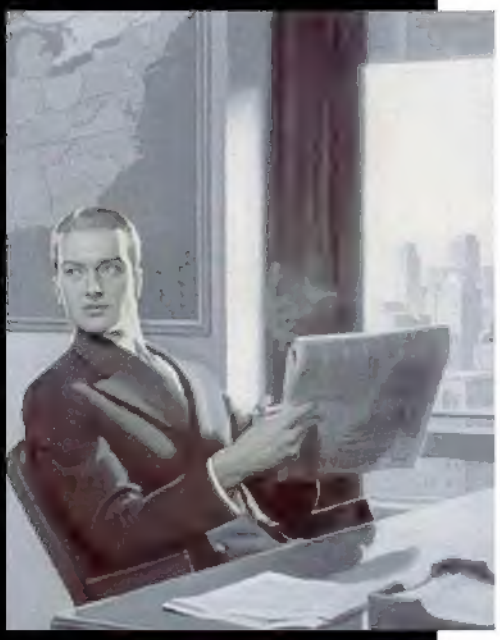
(1909-1945)

H.J.WARD



Ned Jordan,secret agent - 1940

H. J. Ward was the cover artist and it was one of his most daring: sexual tension, violence in action, a beautiful woman, all painted with aggressive brushwork to create a cover that couldn't fail to catch the eye.

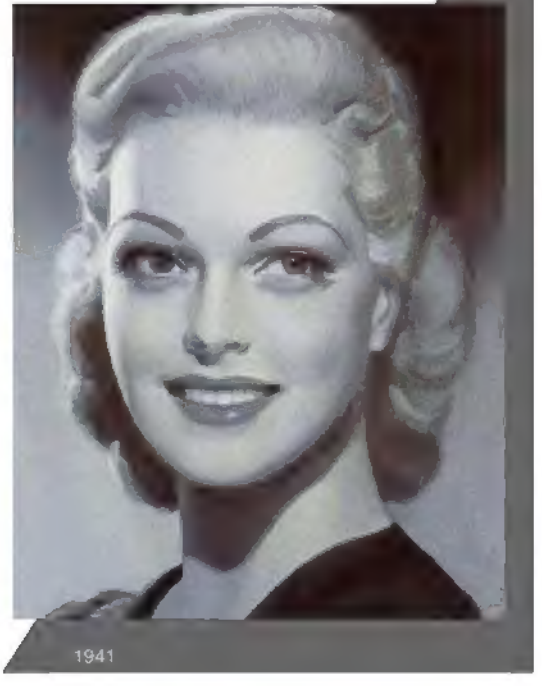


1939

After high school he worked as a cartoonist for the Philadelphia Inquirer, while he studied night classes at the Philadelphia School of Industrial Art.

Hugh Ward had met a typist named Viola Conley at a Philadelphia publishing company. Her parents were Irish and German and she had been raised in a German neighborhood in North Philadelphia. Viola was one year younger than Hugh.

1940



1941

In 1931 at age twenty-two he began to travel by train to New York City in order to visit any pulp publishers who would take the time to look at his portfolio of prospective paintings for western magazines. He soon made his first sale to Wild West Stories and Complete Novel Magazine. Sensational pulp covers by H.J. Ward were soon appearing on Ace-High Western, Argosy, Double Detective, Easy Money, Prison Life Stories, Rangeland Love, Red Star Detective, and Red Star Mystery.

« Private Detective Stories » - August 1939

Ward is most well known for his sensational covers for Spicy Detective and other mags from the Spicy line , but he did do a number of covers for Donnenfeld's Tattle Tales and Bedtime Stories that vary from subdued to whimsical to downright strange. Late 37 is towards the end of the line for this title (and the classic girlie pulps in general)

« Spicy Mystery » - June 1935

In 1931 at age twenty-two he began to travel by train to New York City in order to visit any pulp publishers who would take the time to look at his portfolio of prospective paintings for western magazines. He soon made his first sale to Wild West Stories and Complete Novel Magazine. Sensational pulp covers by H.J. Ward were soon appearing on Ace-High Western, Argosy, Double Detective, Easy Money, Prison Life Stories, Rangeland Love, Red Star Detective, and Red Star Mystery.

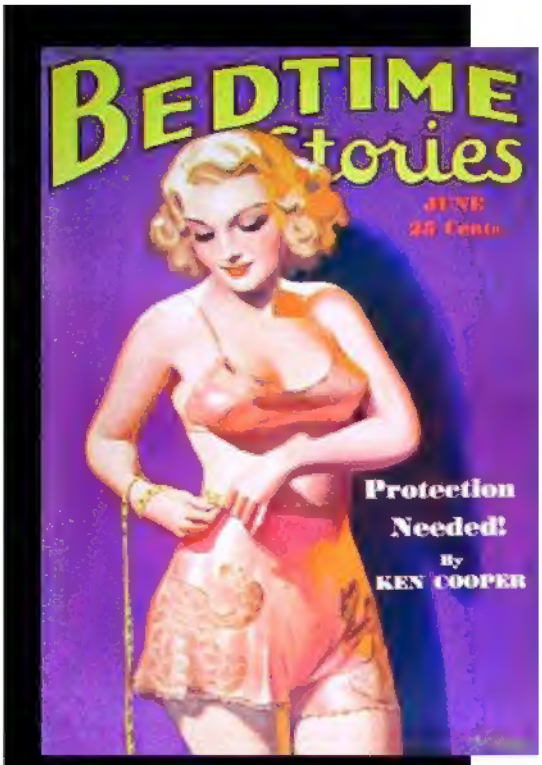
« Spicy Mystery » - February 1936

« Bedtime Stories » - 1936

Hugh and Viola married in August of 1934, and the following year their daughter, Patricia, was born. Ward's art studio was a modest room in his home.

H. J. Ward sold freelance pulp covers to many different publishers, including Munsey, Dell, Popular, but the majority of his work was published by Trojan Publications. Trojan was owned by Harry Donenfeld and edited by Frank Armer.

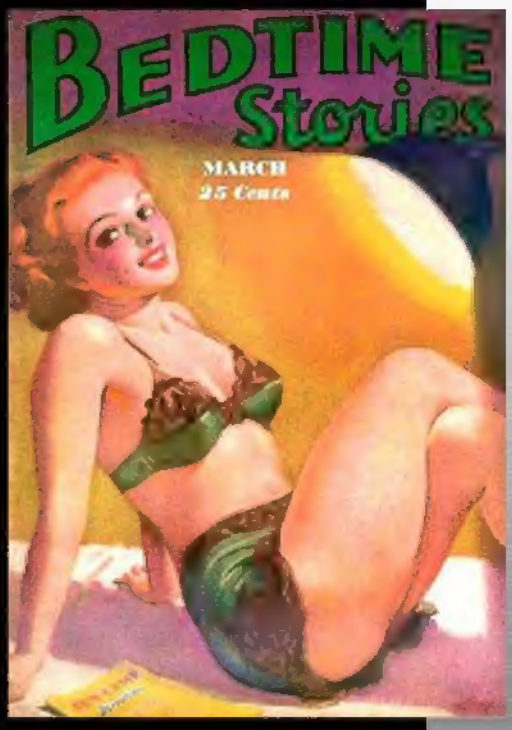
« Spicy Mystery » - 1936



« Bedtime Stories » - 1936

« Spicy Detective » - 1936

« Easy Moneys » ~ 1936



« Bedtime » - 1937

« Lone Ranger » - 1937

« Spicy Western » - 1939

« Spicy Mystery Stories » - February 1940

« Private Detective » - 1940

10¢
Red ★ Star
JUNE
Mystery
When Midnight Monsters Prowl and Evil Grips the City's Throat Summon
DON DIAVOLO, THE SCARLET WIZARD
His First Amazing Adventure Is Excitingly Told in
GHOST OF THE UNDEAD
Complete in This Issue

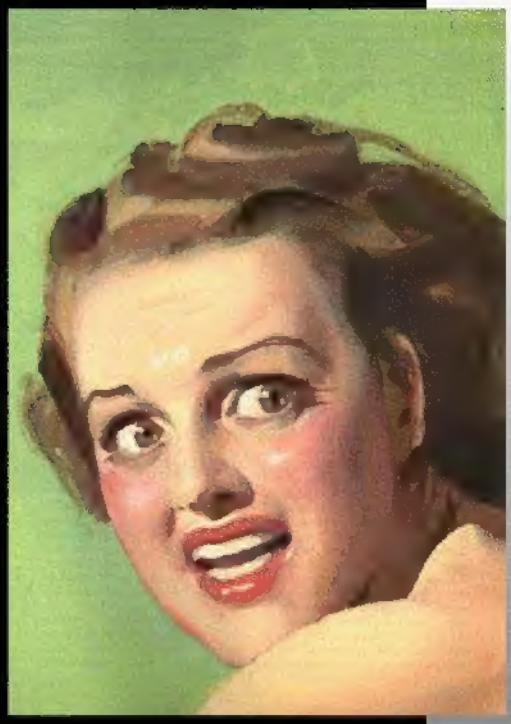
« Red Star Mystery » - 1940

« Spicy Mystery » - 1940

« Spicy Detective » - August 1940

Ward became their top artist. He created many iconic pulp covers for Trojan Magazines, such as Bedtime Stories, Lone Ranger, Speed Adventure, Spicy Adventure, Spicy Detective, Spicy Western, Super Detective, Tattle Tales, and Private Detective.

In 1941 H. J. Ward prepared a portfolio of prospective illustrations to show to art editors in a concerted effort to find work in advertising and slick magazines.



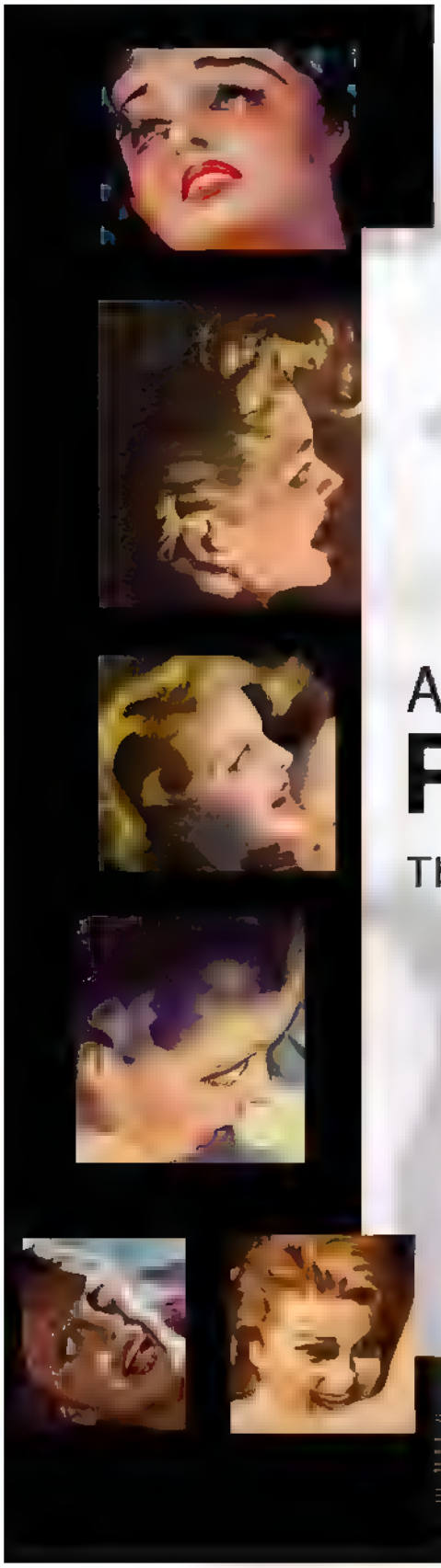
Ward was inducted into the Army on April 13, 1944. He was recorded at induction to be tall, thin, with dark hair, and a heavy smoker.

Soon after enlistment, Ward began to experience problems with his shoulder. Medical examination determined that he had a cancerous tumor in his lung.

Hugh Joseph Ward died at age 35 in February 7, 1945.

H. J. Ward Green Hornet "Capturing the Gang" Painting Original Art (c. 1939).

For a pulp and comic art fan, few vintage paintings have the cachet and eye appeal of a masterpiece by famed Spicy pulp cover master, H. J. Ward. In addition to his famous iconic painting featuring Superman, Ward also created scenes of popular culture heroes the Lone Ranger, Dan Turner, Super-Detective and the Green Hornet. This piece, noted in H. J. Ward's own log book as "Capturing the Gang" is one of a very few Green Hornet scenes he is known to have painted, and one of the largest known to exist. The Green Hornet casts a menacing shadow in this scene and in his cast shadow can be discerned the forms of his signature hat and gun.



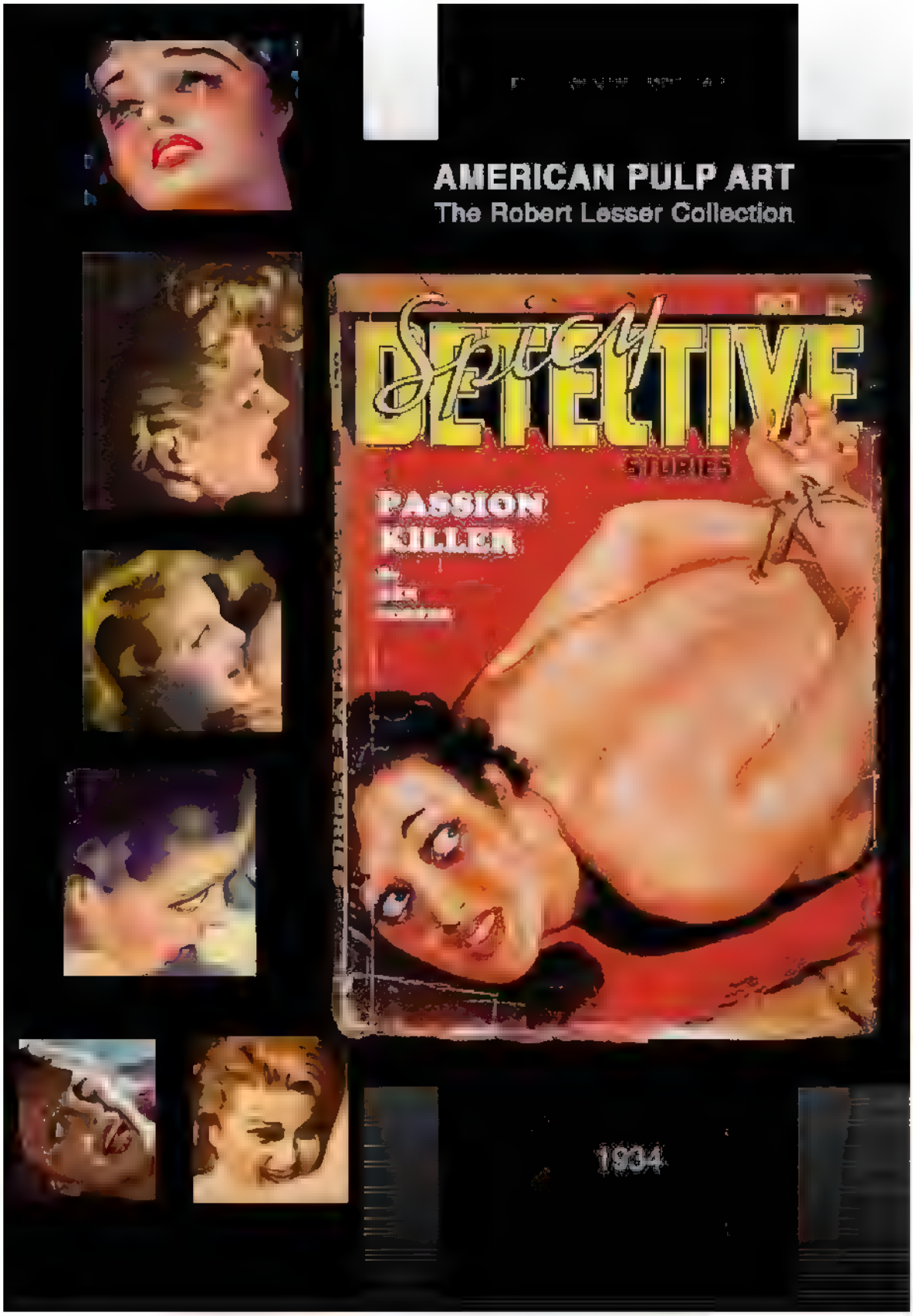
AMERICAN

Pulp Art

The Robert Lesser Collection

Spicy Pulps

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
FEB.
25¢
SPICY-ADVENTURE STORIES
FOX FURY by Lew Merrill
1934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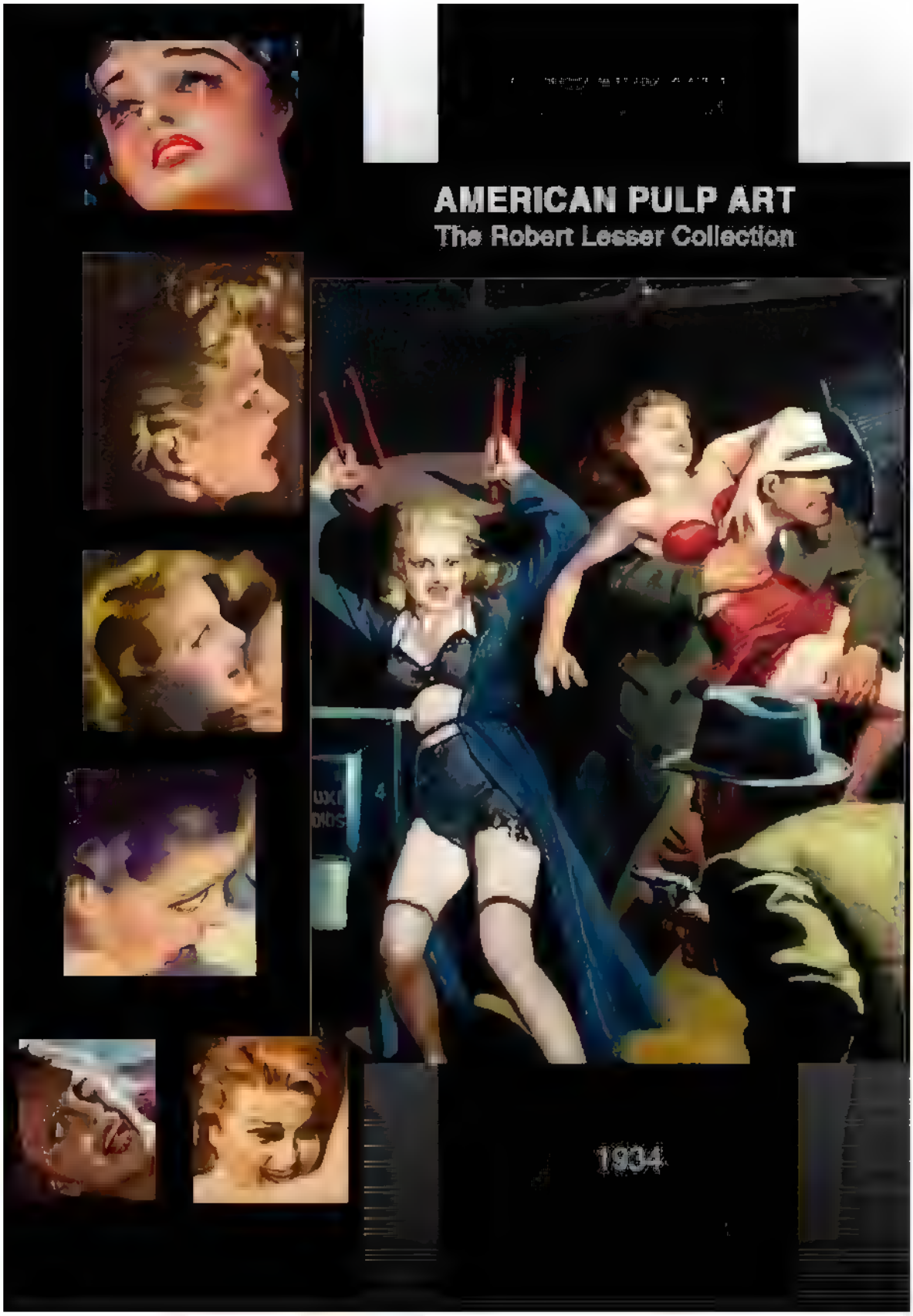
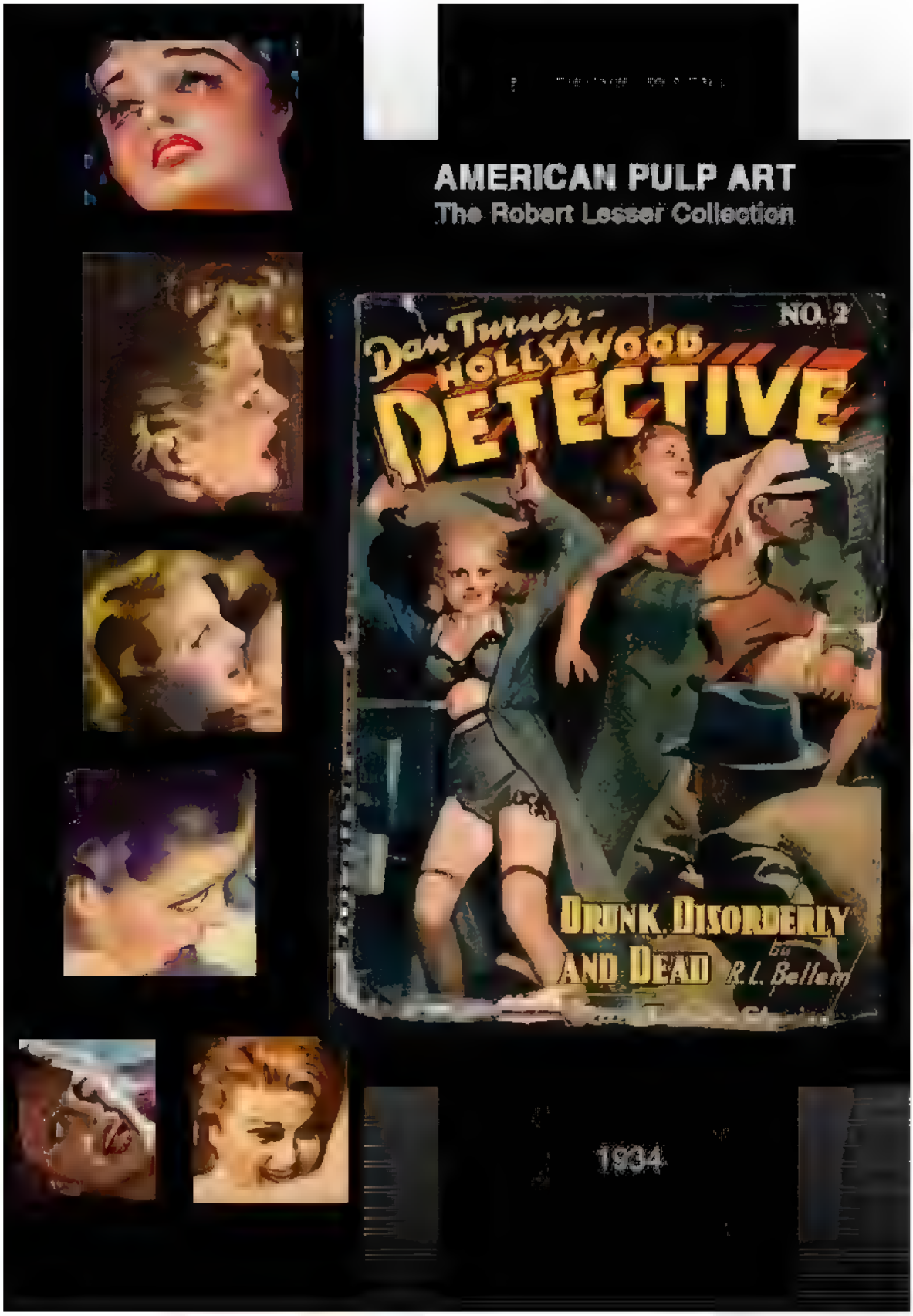
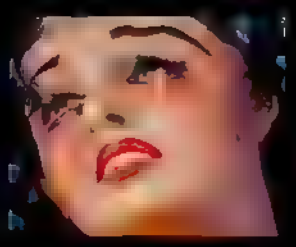
The Robert Lesser Collection
Spicy
DETECTIVE
STORIES
PASSION
KILLER
1934


AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
1934

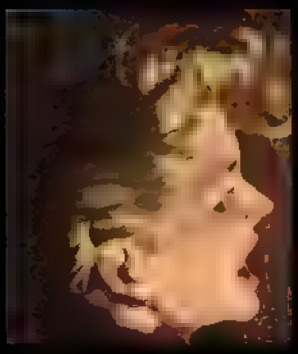

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
Dan Turner~
HOLLYWOOD
DETECTIVE
NO. 2
DRUNK, DISORDERLY
AND DEAD
by
R.L. Bellem
1934

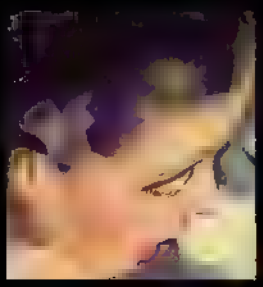
AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
SPICY MYSTERY
25c
STORIES
for
HELL
1935

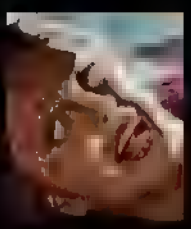


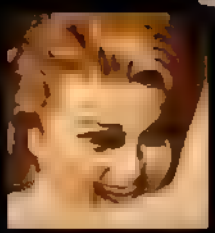
AMERICAN PULP ART

The Robert Lesser Collection









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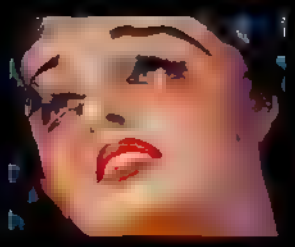
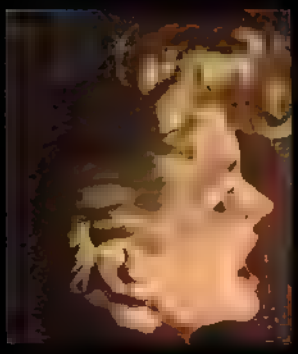
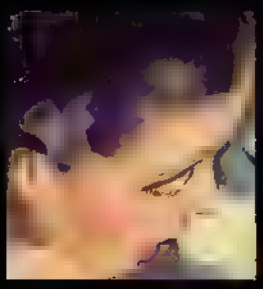


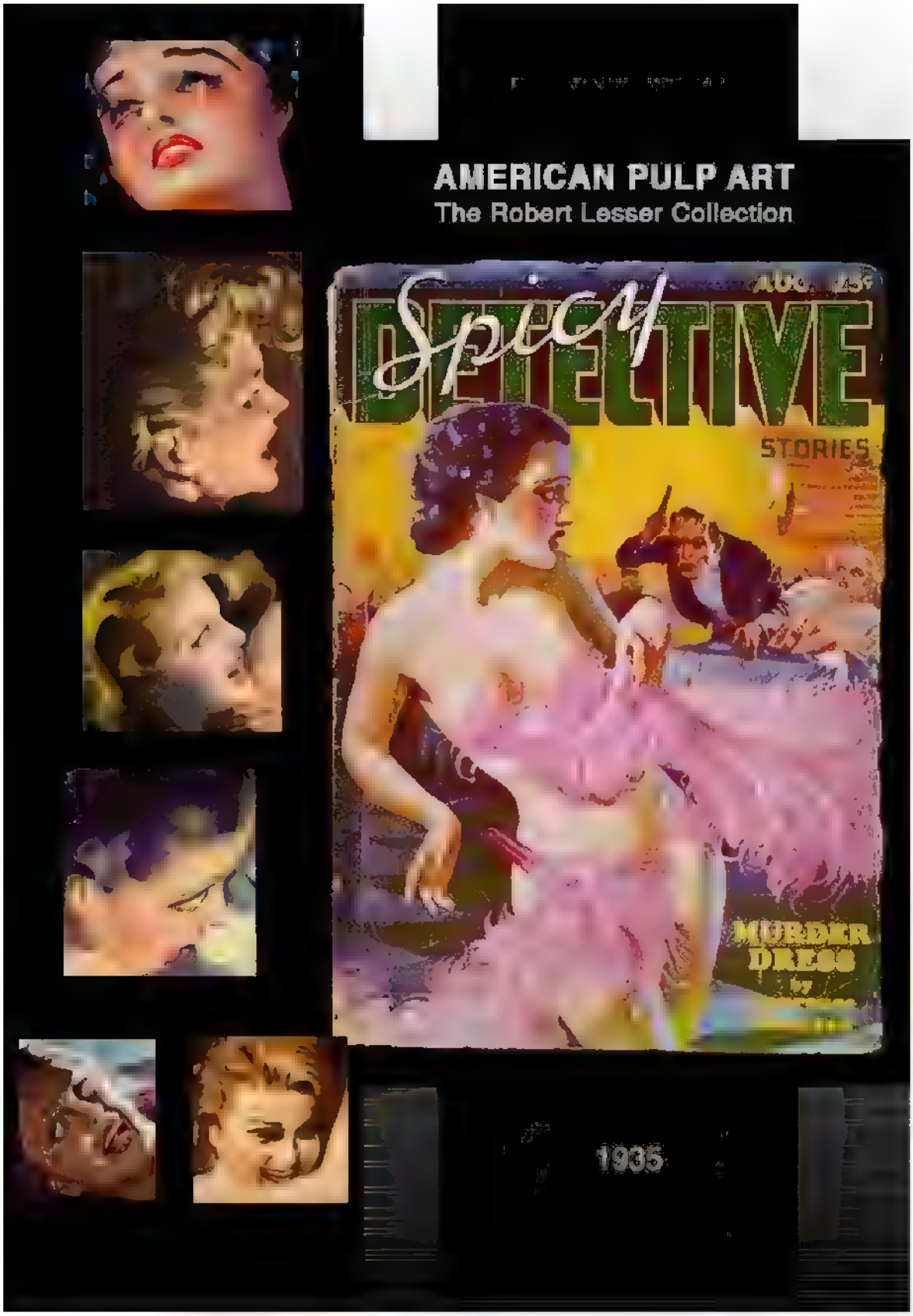
AMERICAN PULP ART

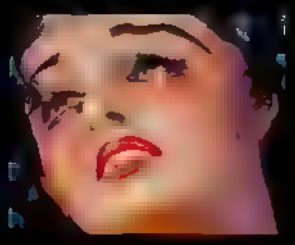
The Robert Lesser Collection





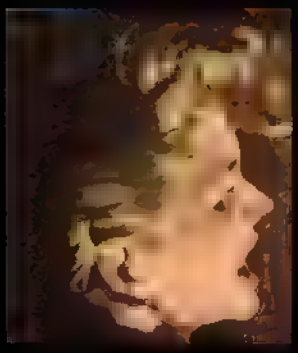
1935

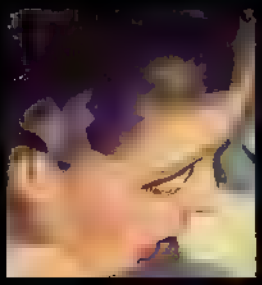

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
Spicy
DETECTIVE
STORIES
MURDER
DRESS
1935

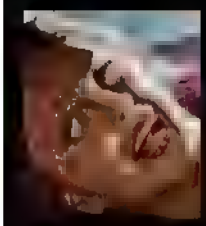


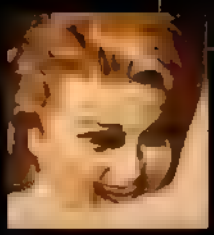
AMERICAN PULP ART

The Robert Lesser Collection

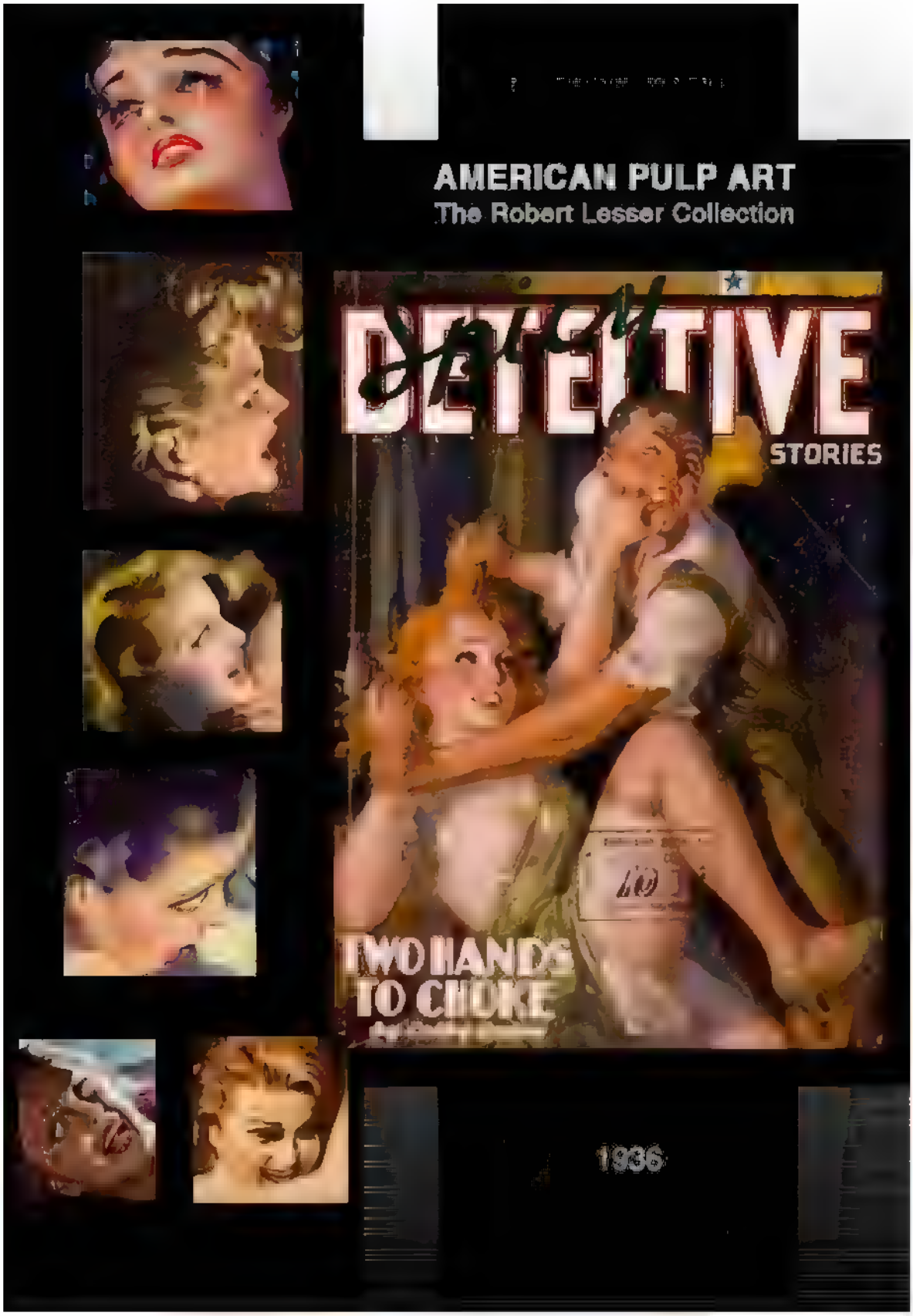




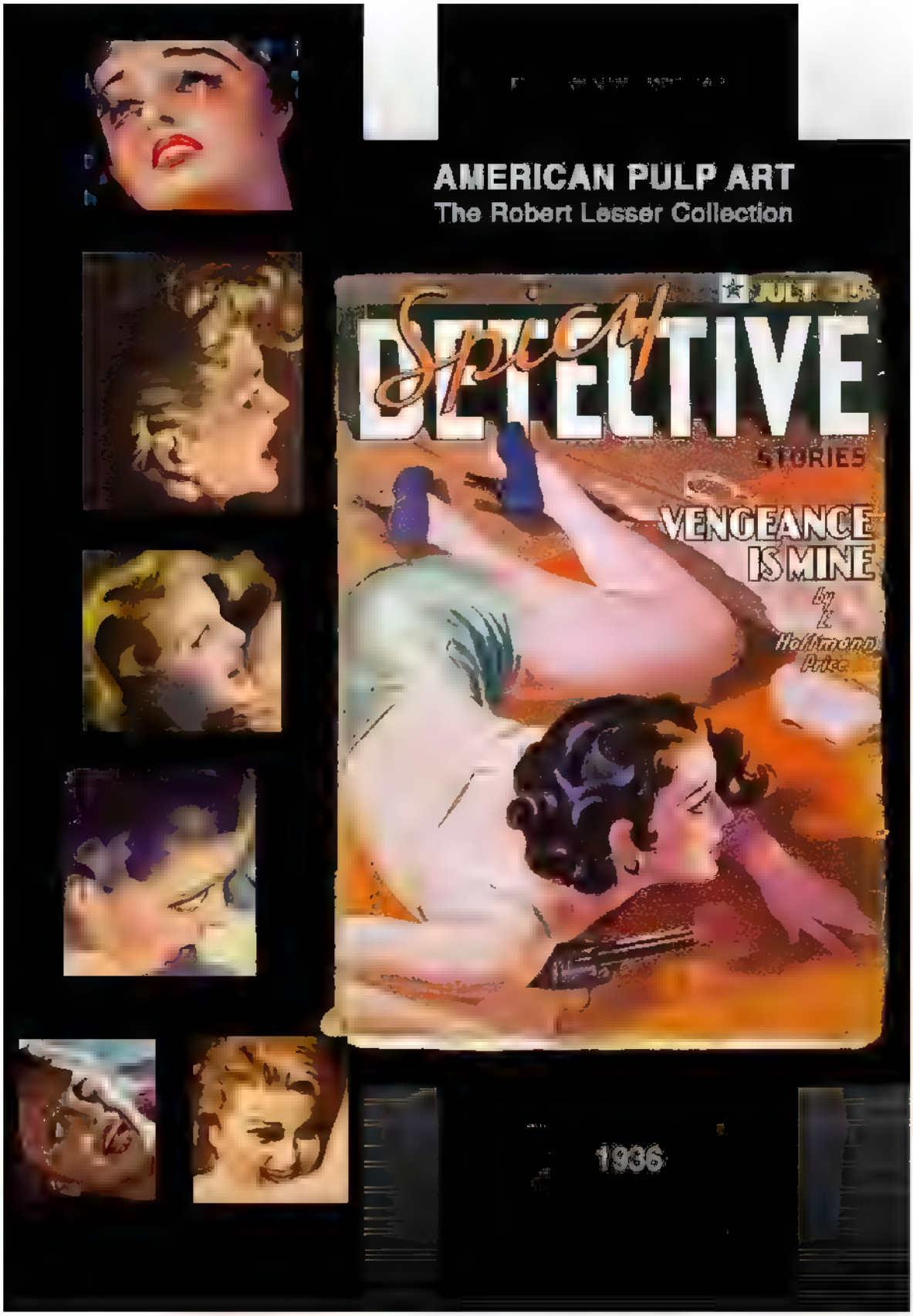




1936


AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
DETECTIVE
STORIES
TWO HANDS TO CHOKE
1936

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
SPICY MYSTERY
25c
for
AUGUST
by Justin Case
1936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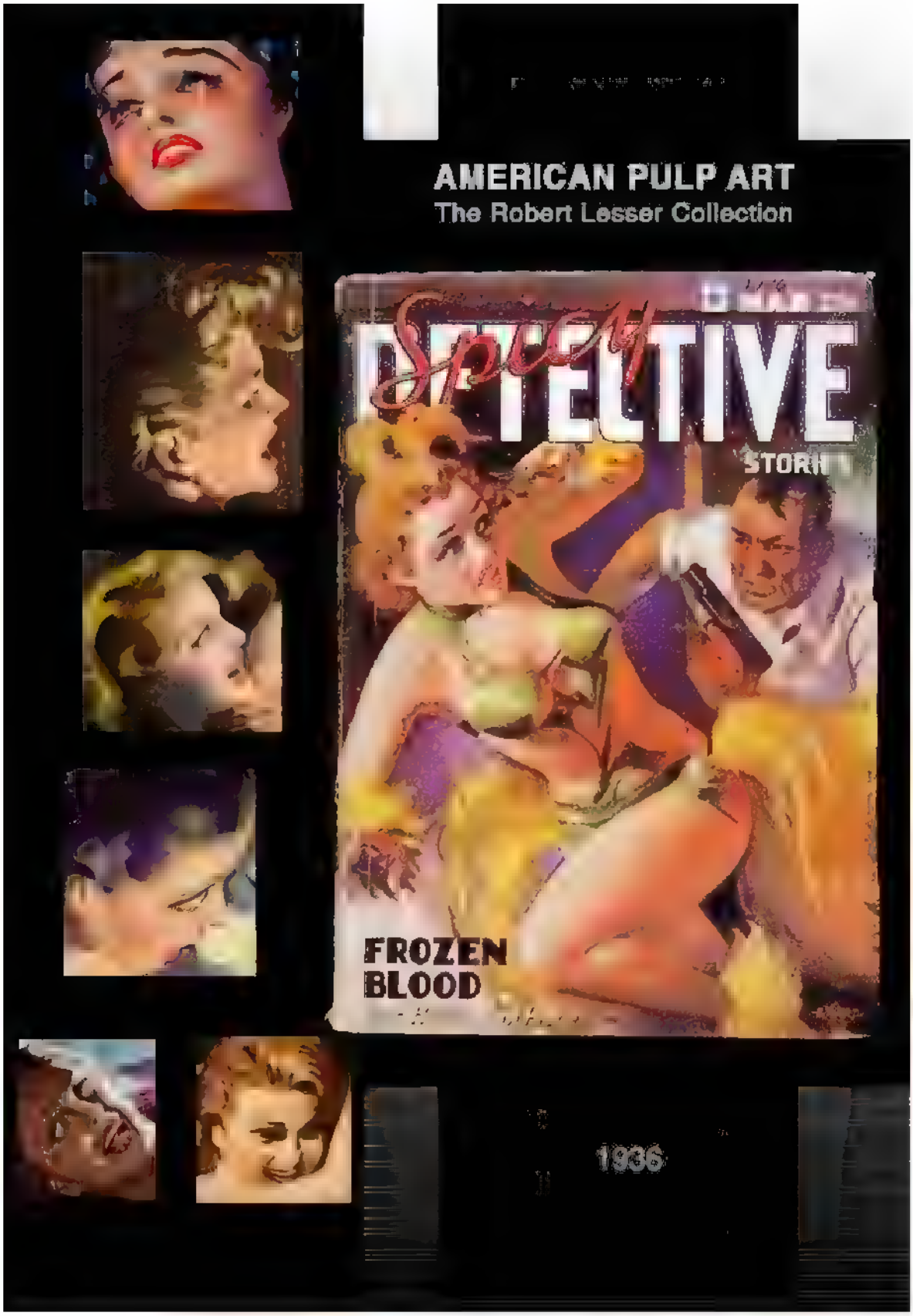
The Robert Lesser Collection
Special
DETECTIVE
STORIES
VENGEANCE IS MINE
1936


AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
Spicy
DETECTIVE
STORIES
FROZEN
BLOOD
1936

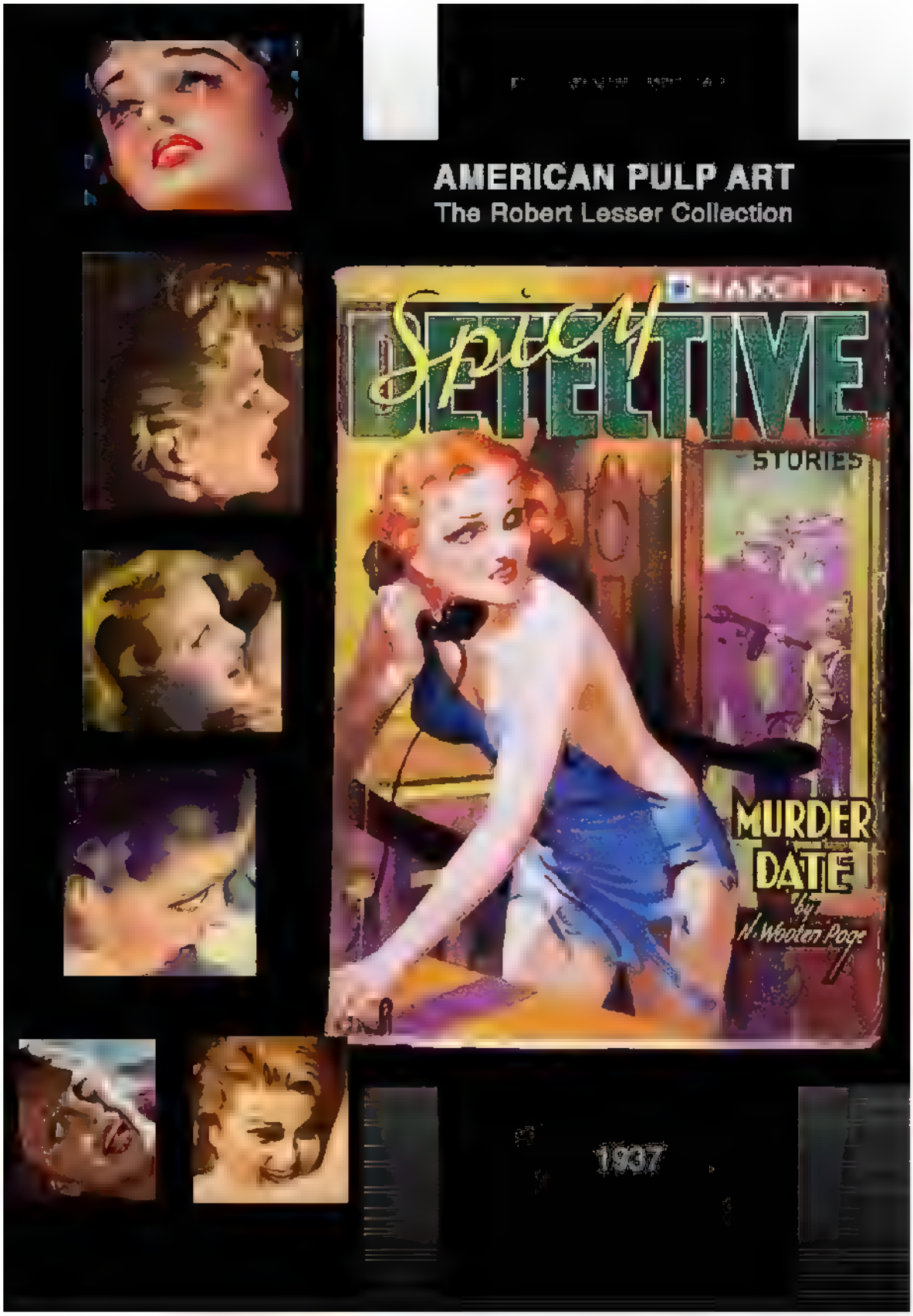
AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
SPICY WESTERN STORIES
DARLING of DIABLO
1937

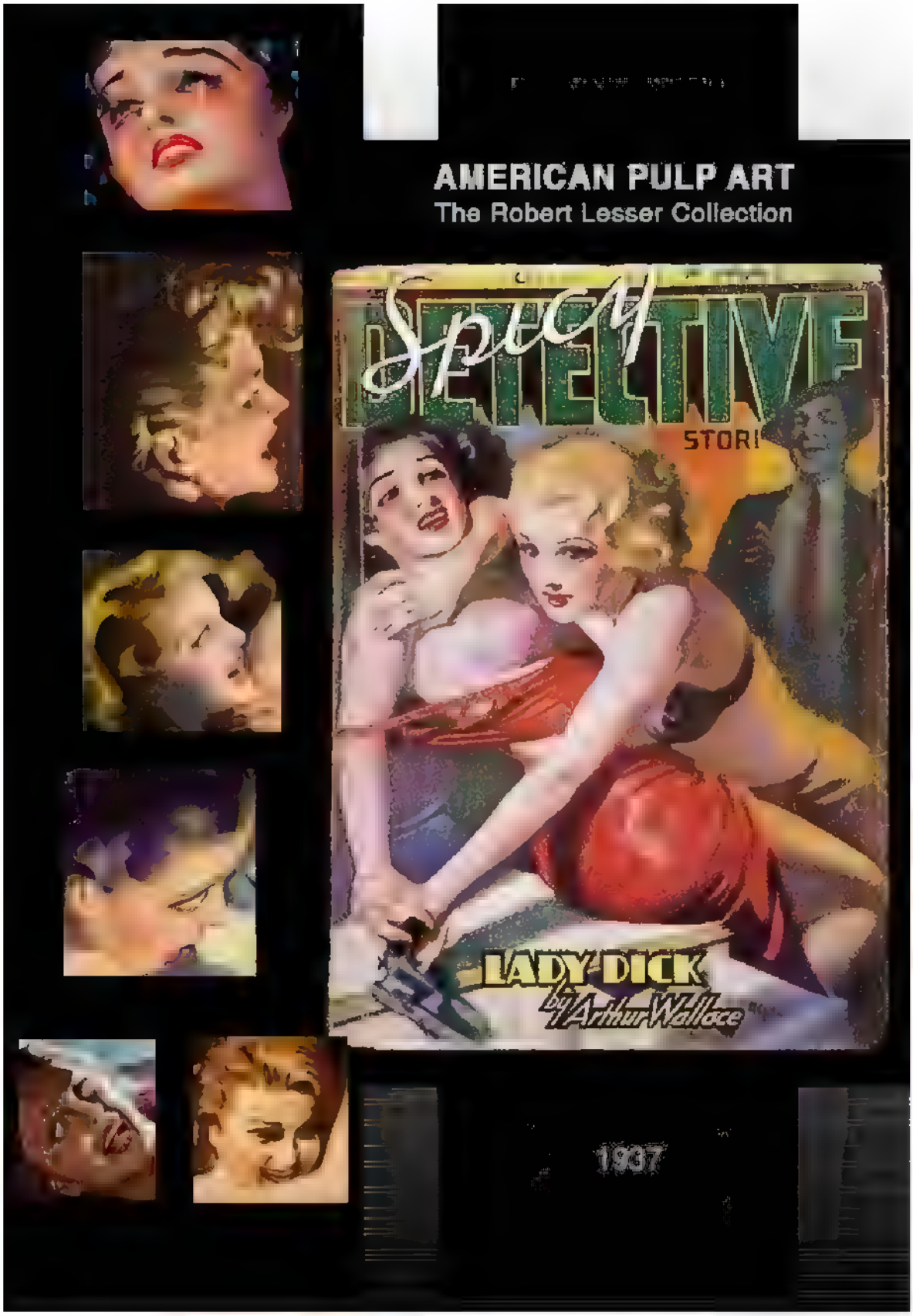
AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
SPICY-ADVENTURE STORIES
for VALOR
by Robert Leslie Bellem
1937

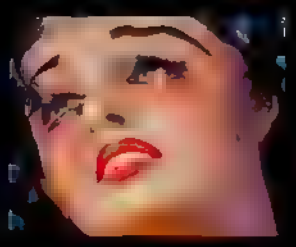
AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
SPICY-ADVENTURE STORIES
SPY LINER
1937

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
SPICY MYSTERY
25c
STORIES
for
JUNE
TOMB of LIVING
1937

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
A. R.
25¢
SPICY-
ADVENTURE
STORIES
MASTER
YELLOW
1937

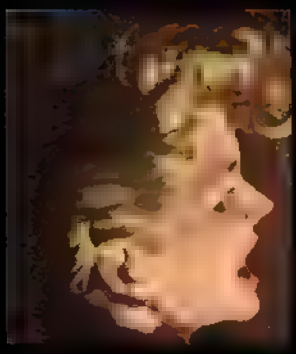

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
Spicy
DETECTIVE
STORIES
MARCH
MURDER DATE
by
N. Wooten Page
1937

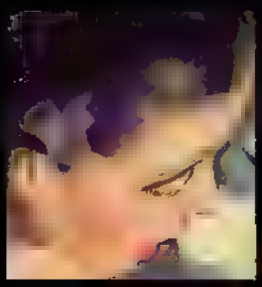

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
Spicy
DETECTIVE
STORI
LADY DICK
by Arthur Wallace
1937

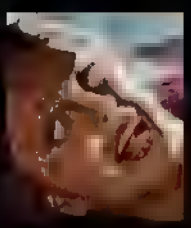


AMERICAN PULP ART

The Robert Lesser Collection

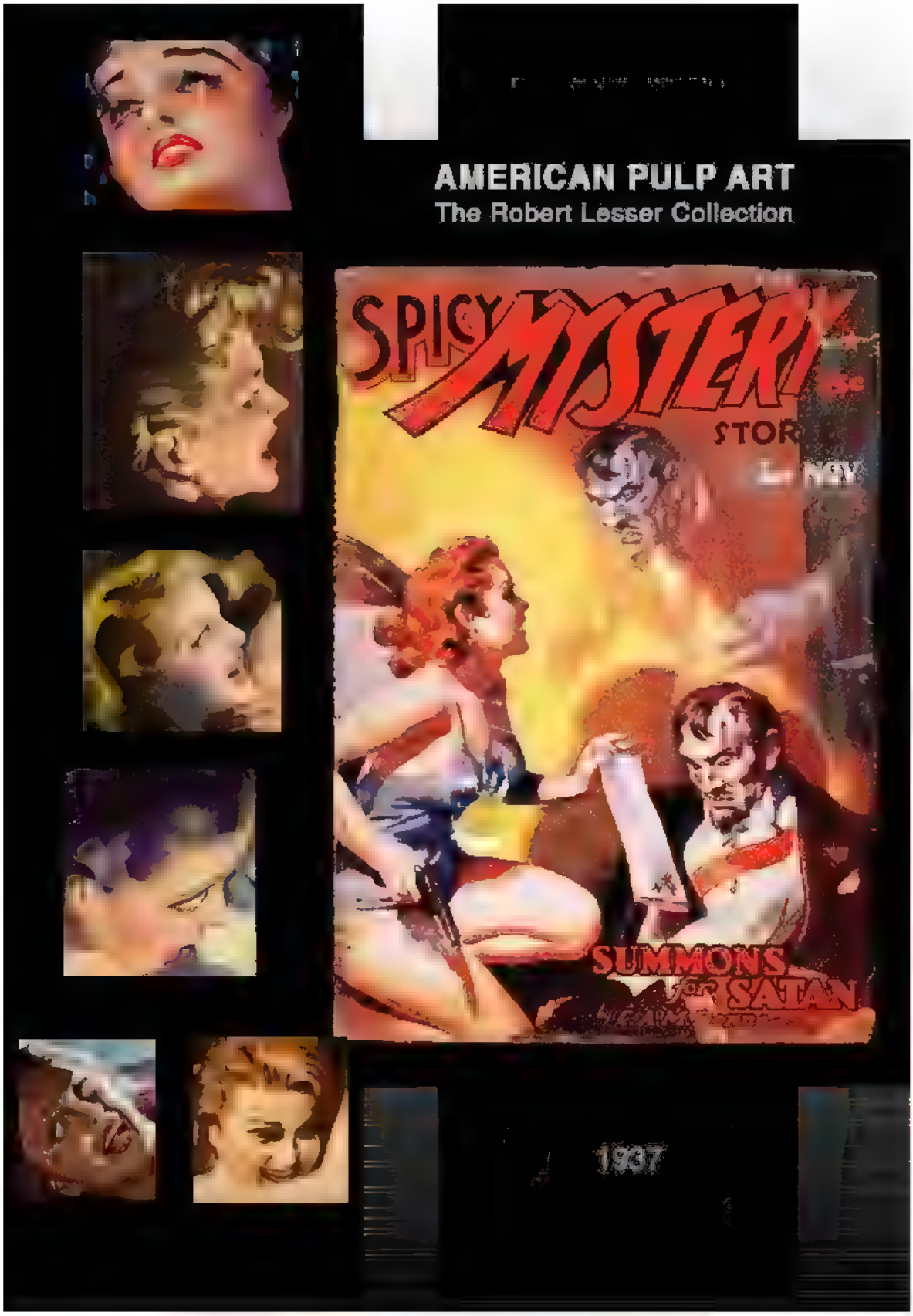






1937

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
SPICY MYSTERY
25c
for MARCH
by
Henry Kuttner
1937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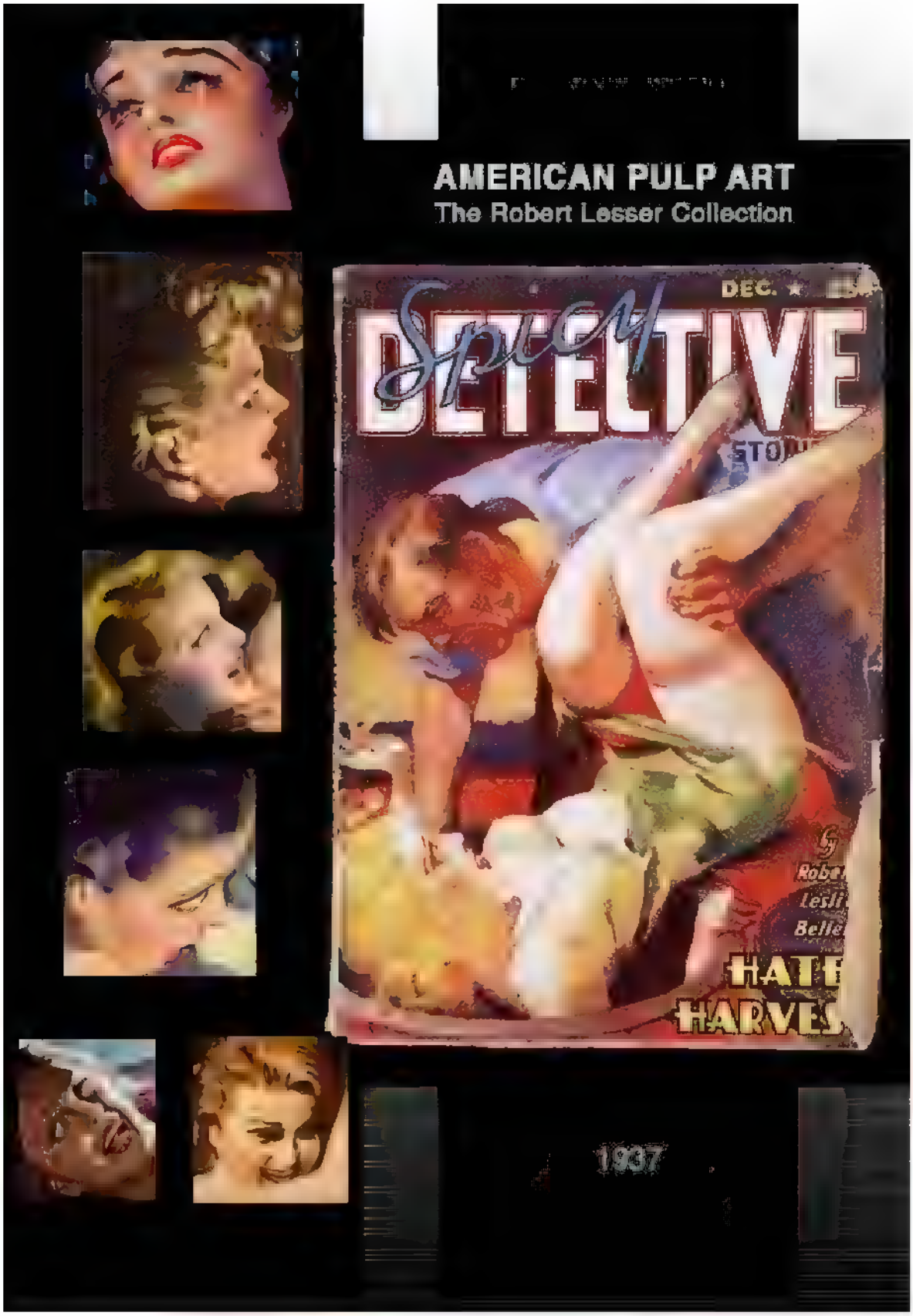
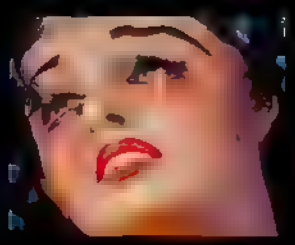
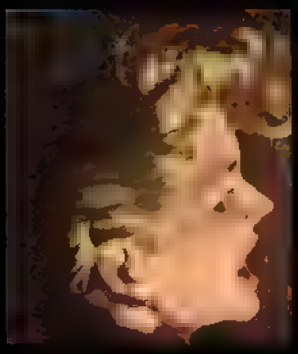
The Robert Lesser Collection
SPICY MYSTERY
STORIES
SUMMONS for SATAN
1937

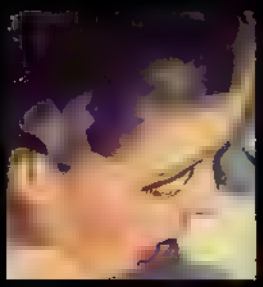

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
Spicy
DETECTIVE
DEC.
1937

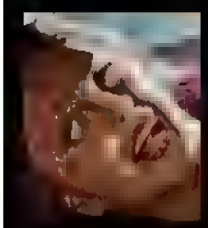


AMERICAN PULP ART

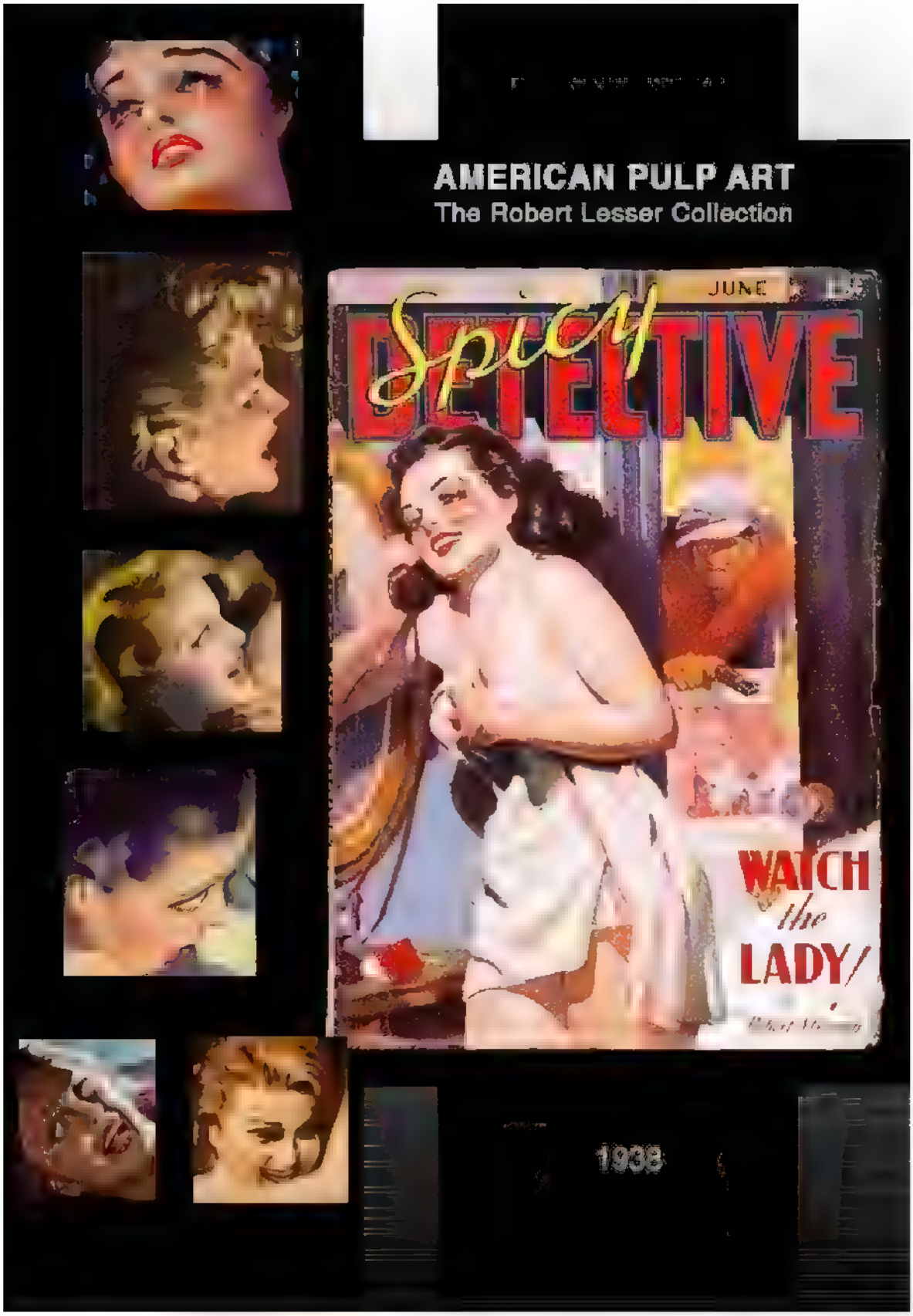
The Robert Lesser Collection

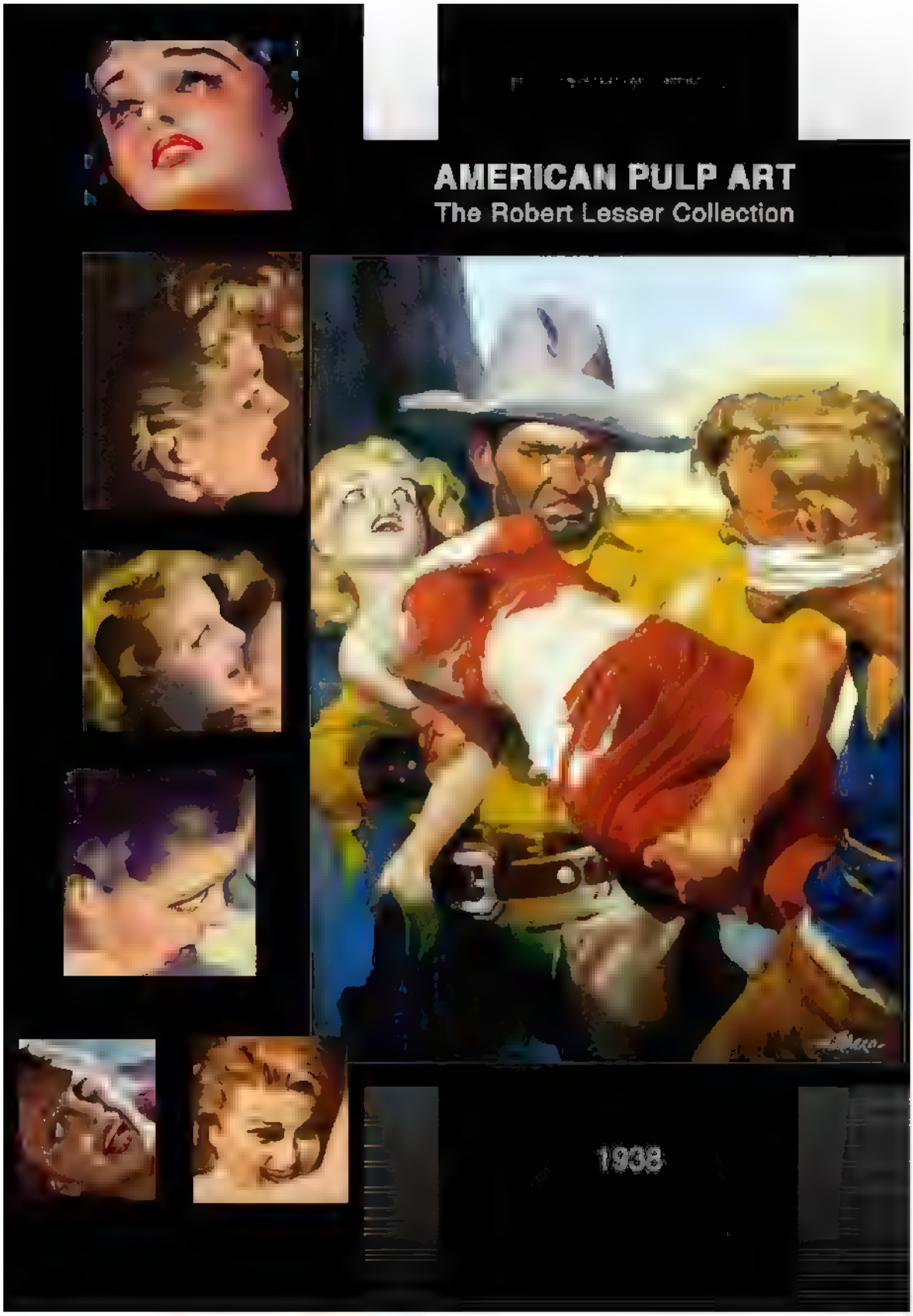


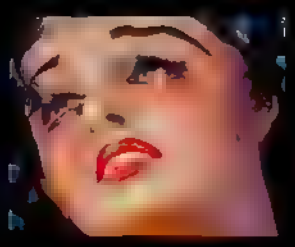




1938

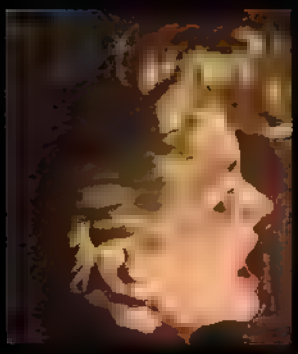

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
JUNE
Spicy
DETECTIVE
WATCH the LADY!
1938

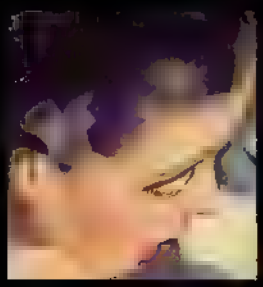

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
1938

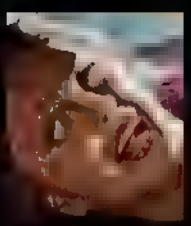


AMERICAN PULP ART

The Robert Lesser Collection

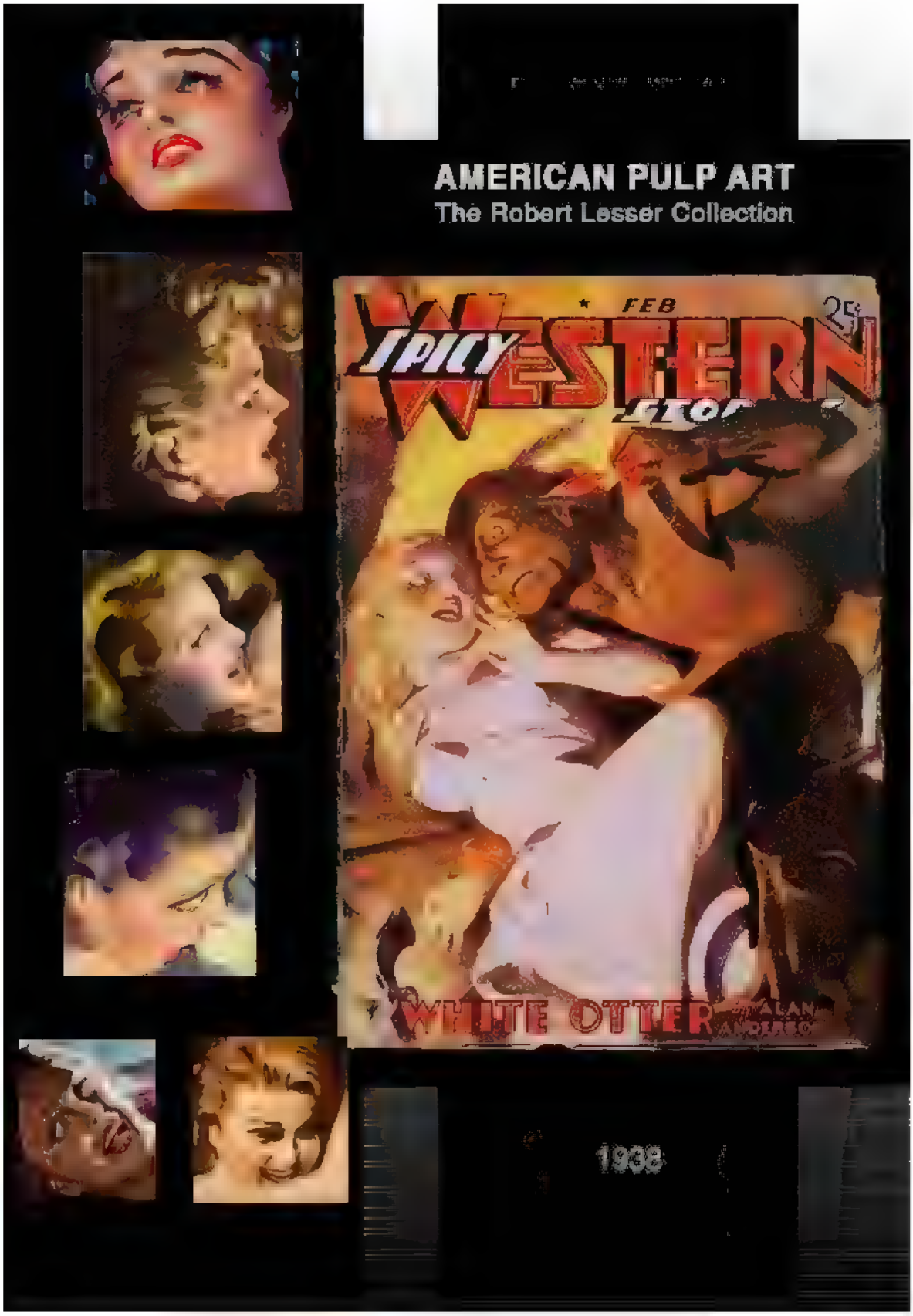




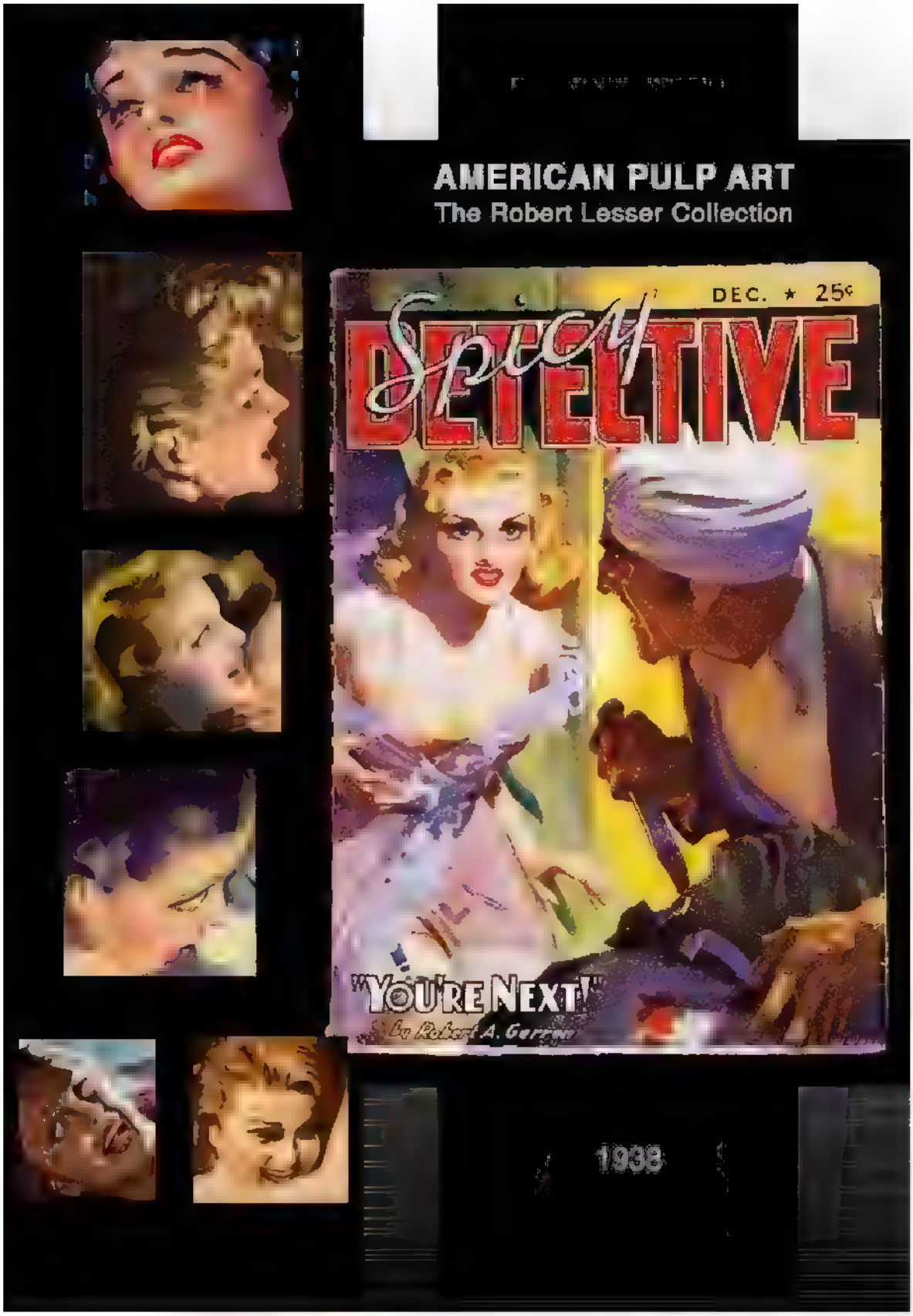


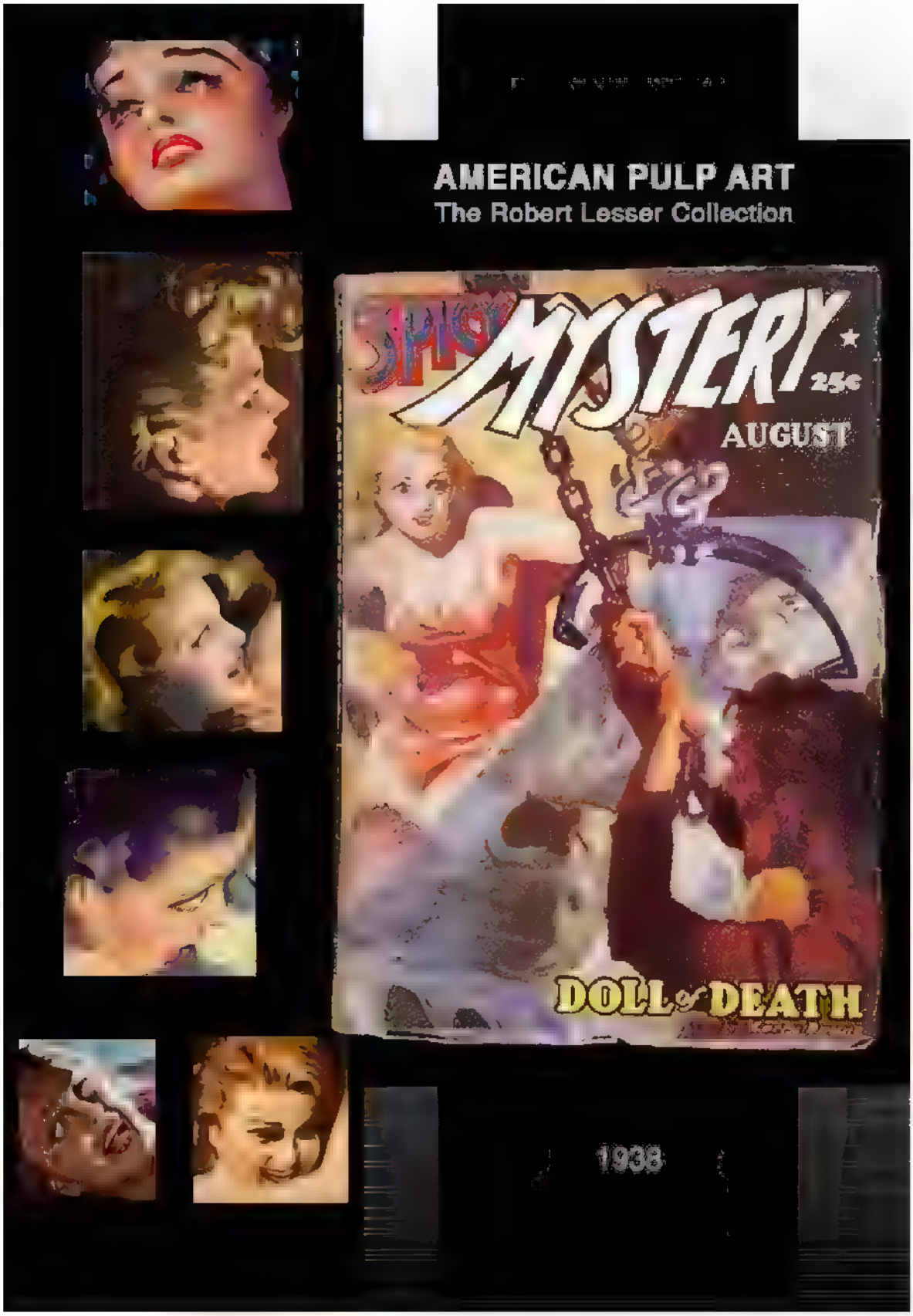
1938

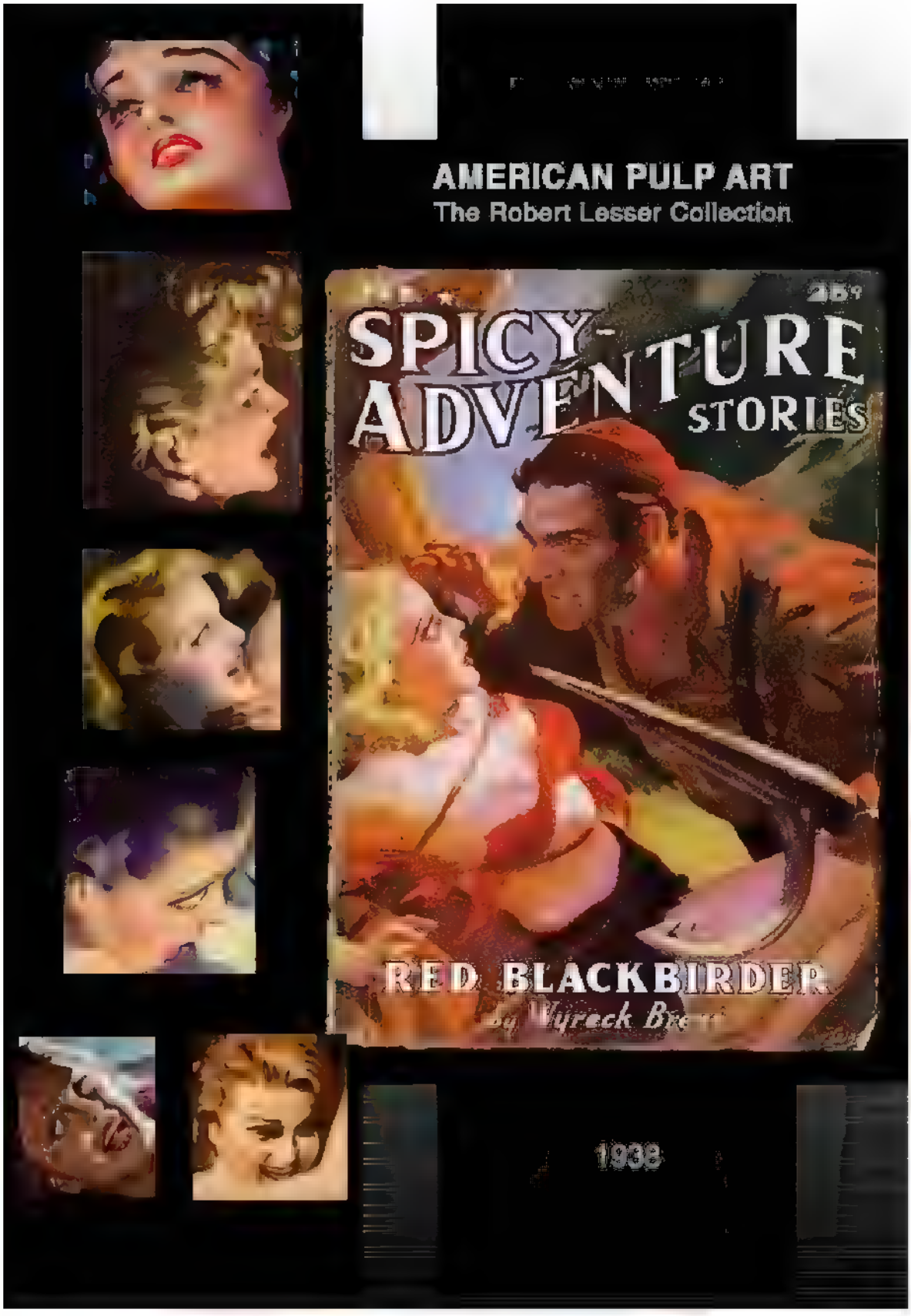
AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
★ JUNE
SPICY WESTERN STORIES
HUNGRY VALLEY
F. Hoffmann Price
1938

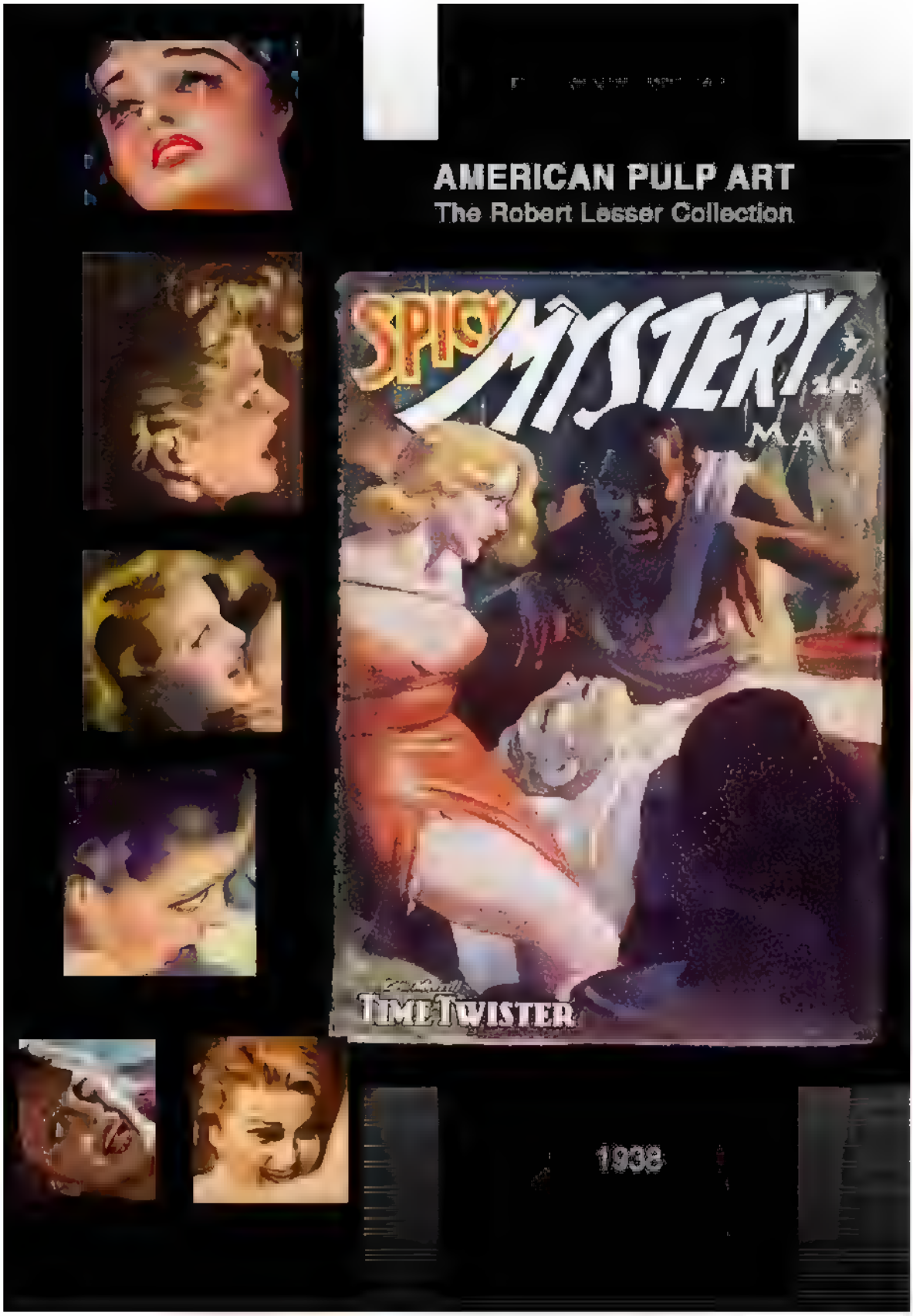

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
FEB
25¢
SPICY
WESTERN
WHITE OTTER
1938

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
Spicy
DETECTIVE
RAT BAIT
by
Dale Boyd
1936


AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
DEC. ★ 25¢
Spicy
DETECTIVE
"YOU'RE NEXT!"
by Robert A. Gerrow
1938

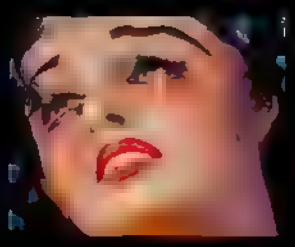

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
MYSTERY
25¢
AUGUST
DOLL of DEATH
1938

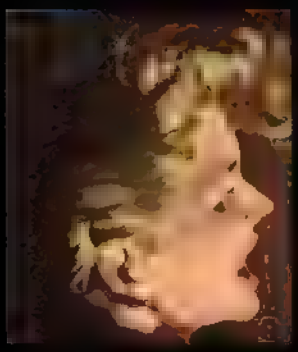

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
SPICY-ADVENTURE STORIES
RED BLACKBIRDER
1938

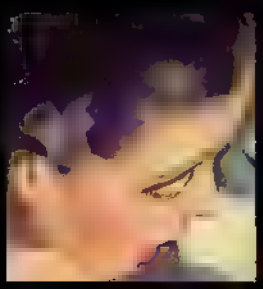

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
SPICY MYSTERY
MAY
TIME TWISTER
1938

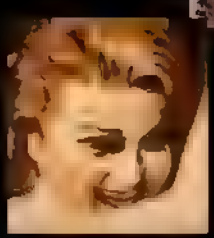
AMERICAN PULP ART

The Robert Lesser Collection



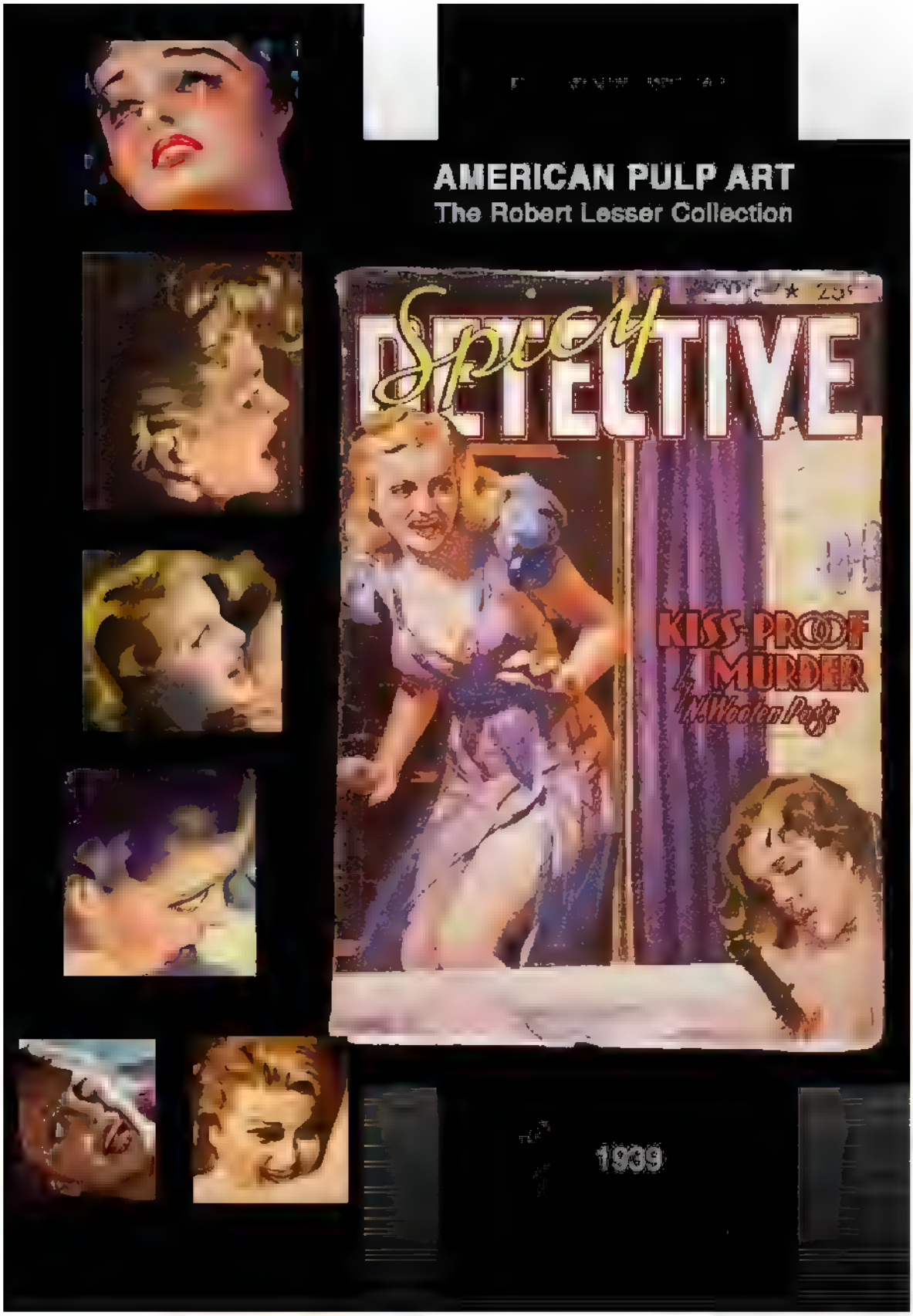




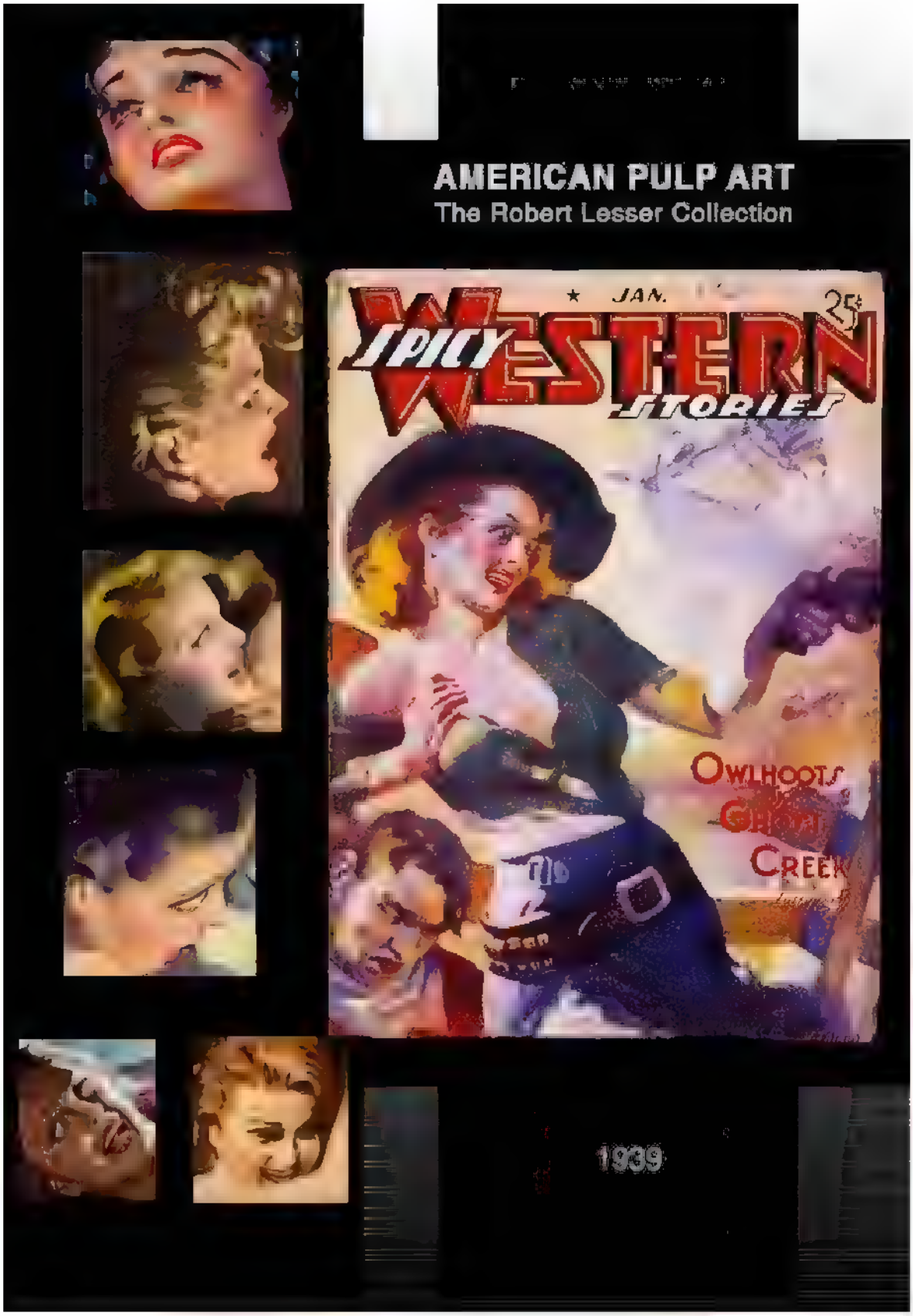


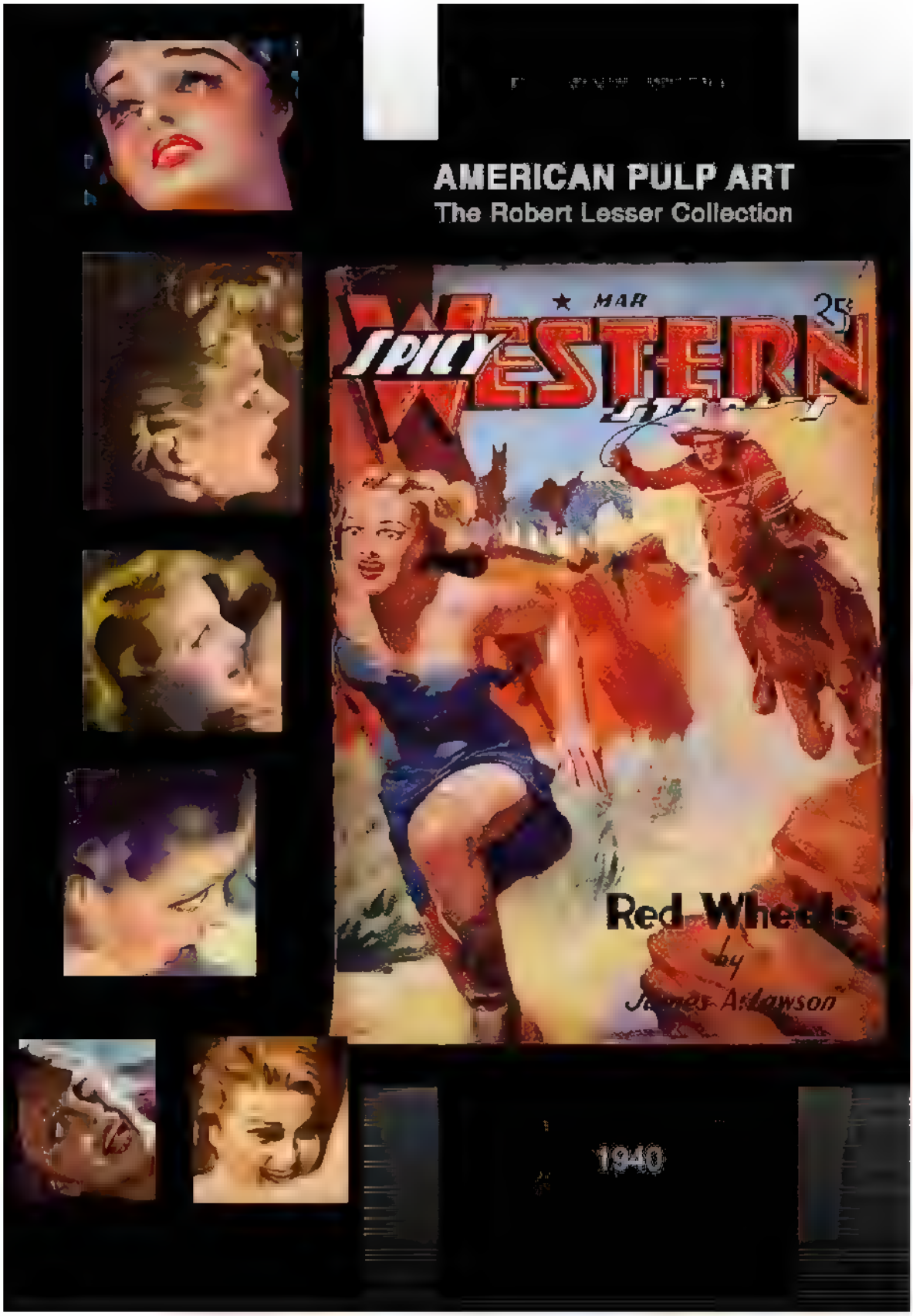
1939

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
JUNE ★ 25¢
SPICY ADVENTURE STORIES
SILVER SKIN
1939

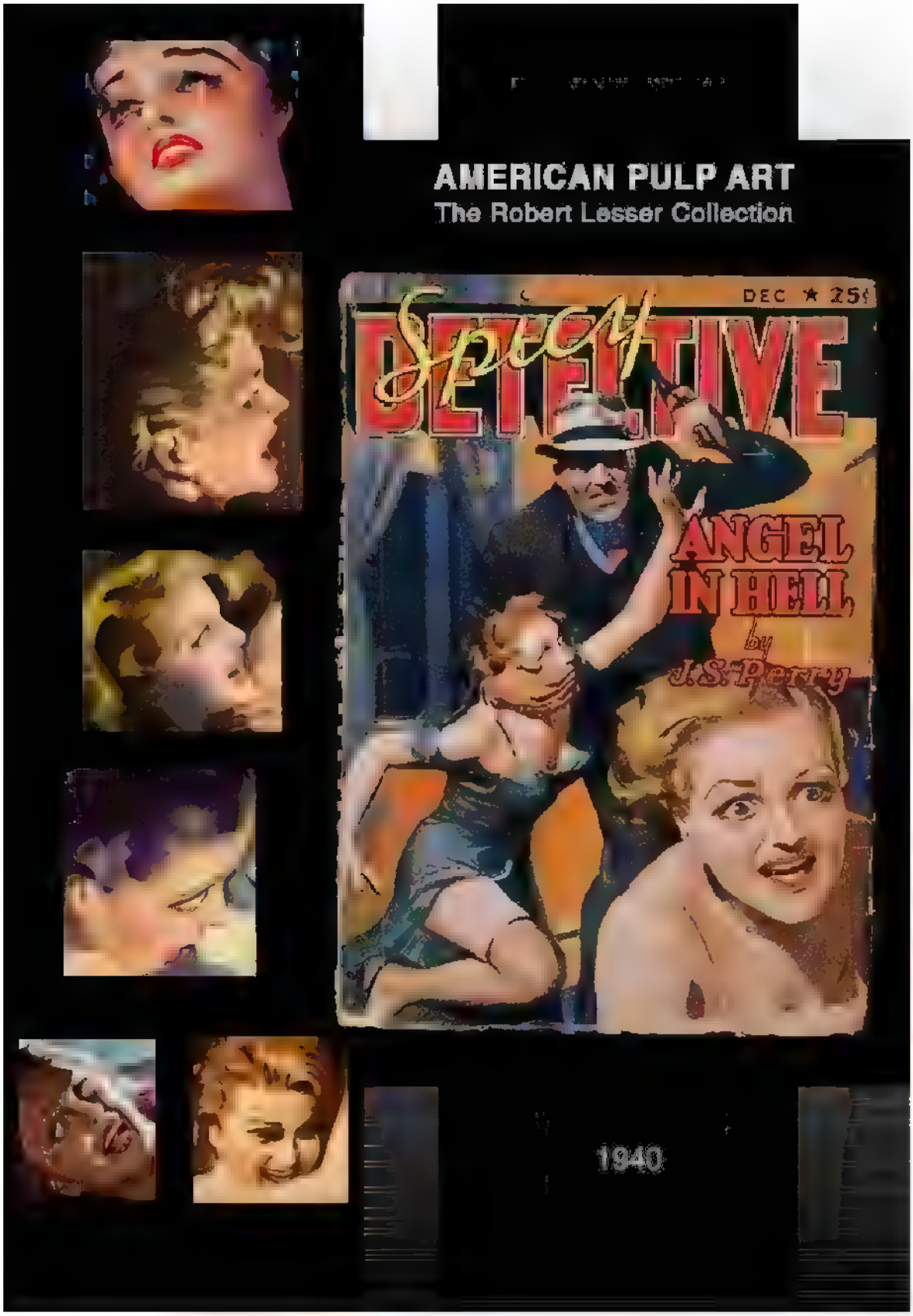

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
Spicy
DETECTIVE
KISS-PROOF MURDER
1939

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
SPICY MYSTERY
25c
STORIES
For APRIL
BLACK BLOOD CALL
1939

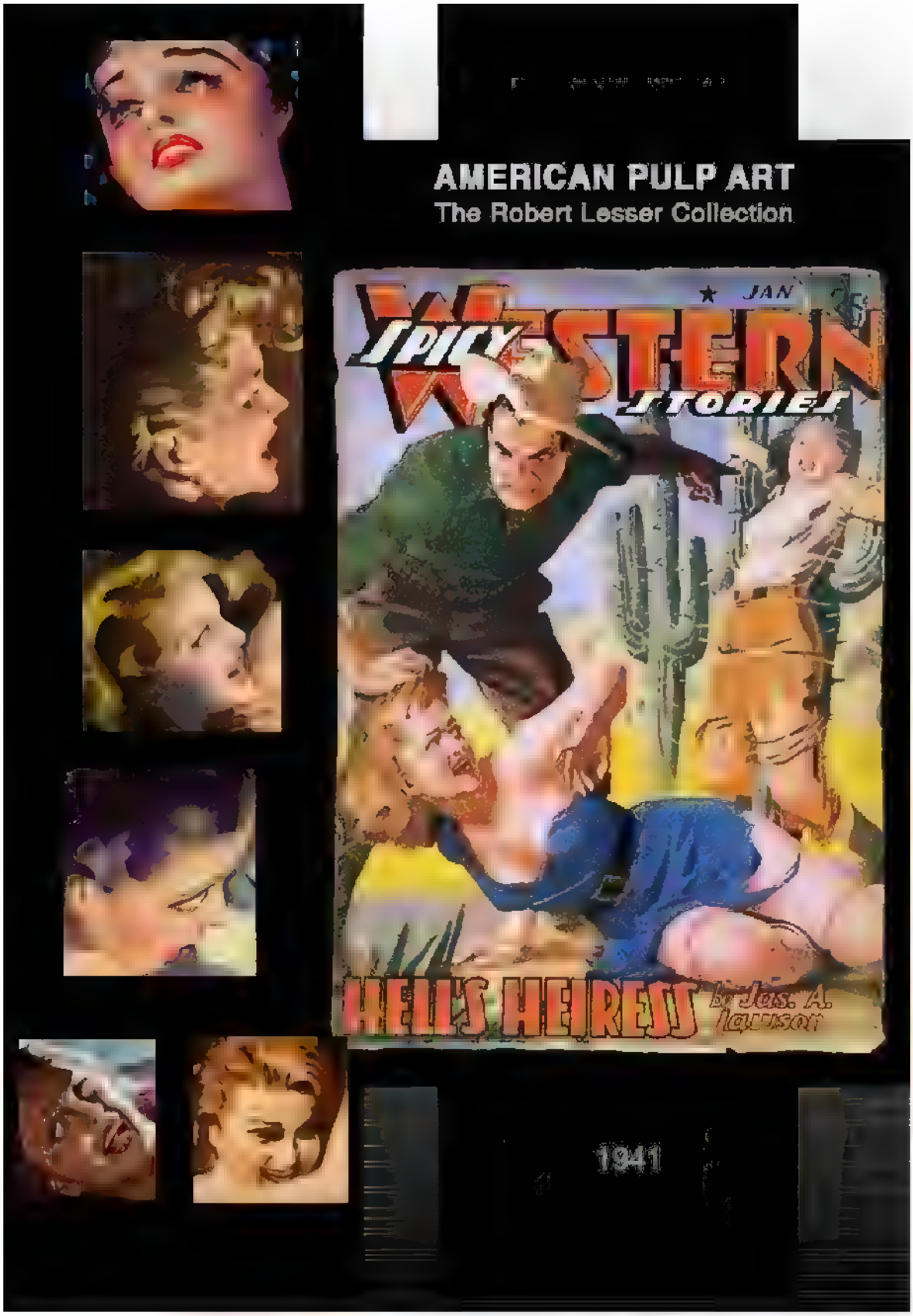

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
★ JAN. 25¢
SPICY WESTERN STORIES
OWLHOOTS
CREEK
1939


AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
★ MAR
25¢
SPICY WESTERN STORIES
Red Wheels
by
James Arlawson
1940

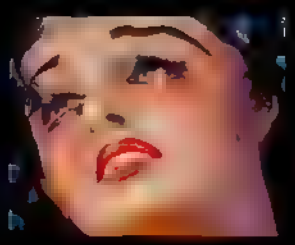
AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
SPICY MYSTERY
APRI
INSANE CORPSE
William B. Rainey
1940


AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
DEC ★ 25¢
Speed
DETECTIVE
ANGEL IN HELL
by
J.S. Perry
1940

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
SPICY MYSTERY
25c
The LIFTED VEIL
by
Lew Merrill
1940

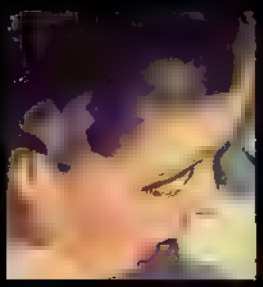

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
JAN
SPICY WESTERN STORIES
HELL'S HEIRESS
By Jess A. Ravenson
1941

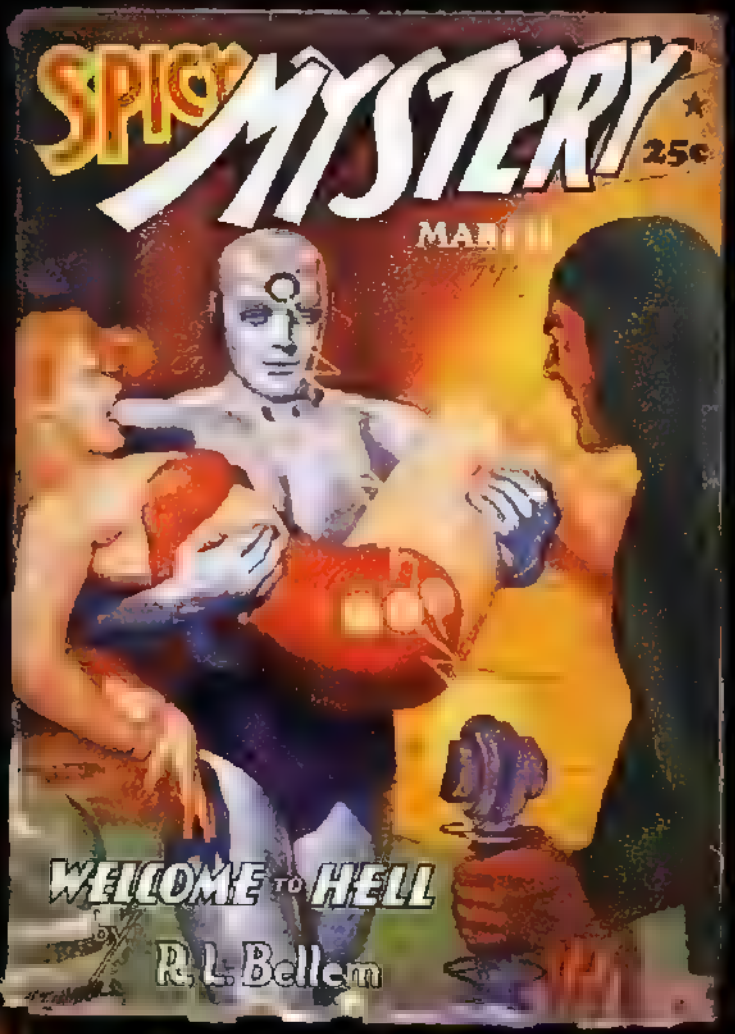
AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
SPICY MYSTERY
25c
The PERSUADER
by Robert A Garron
1941

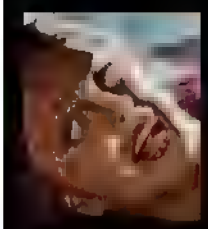


AMERICAN PULP ART

The Robert Lesser Collection







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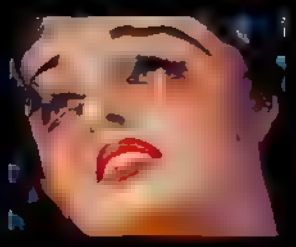
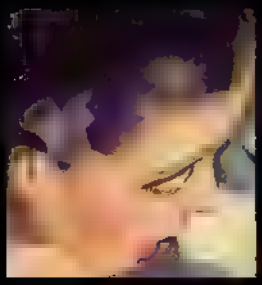
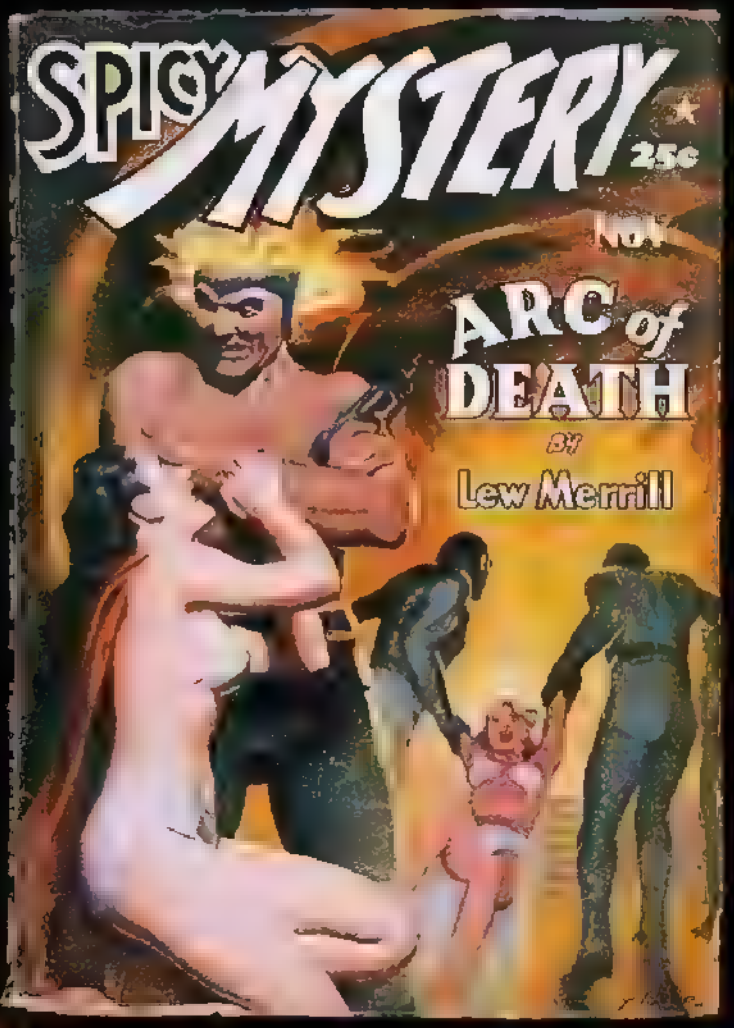
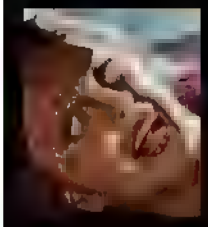


AMERICAN PULP ART

The Robert Lesser Collection







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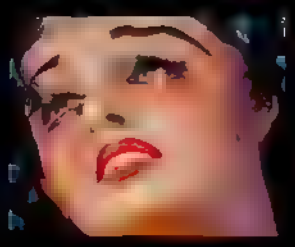
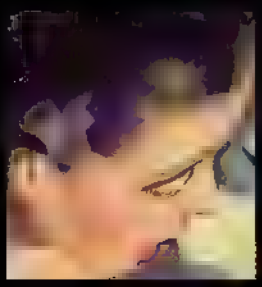
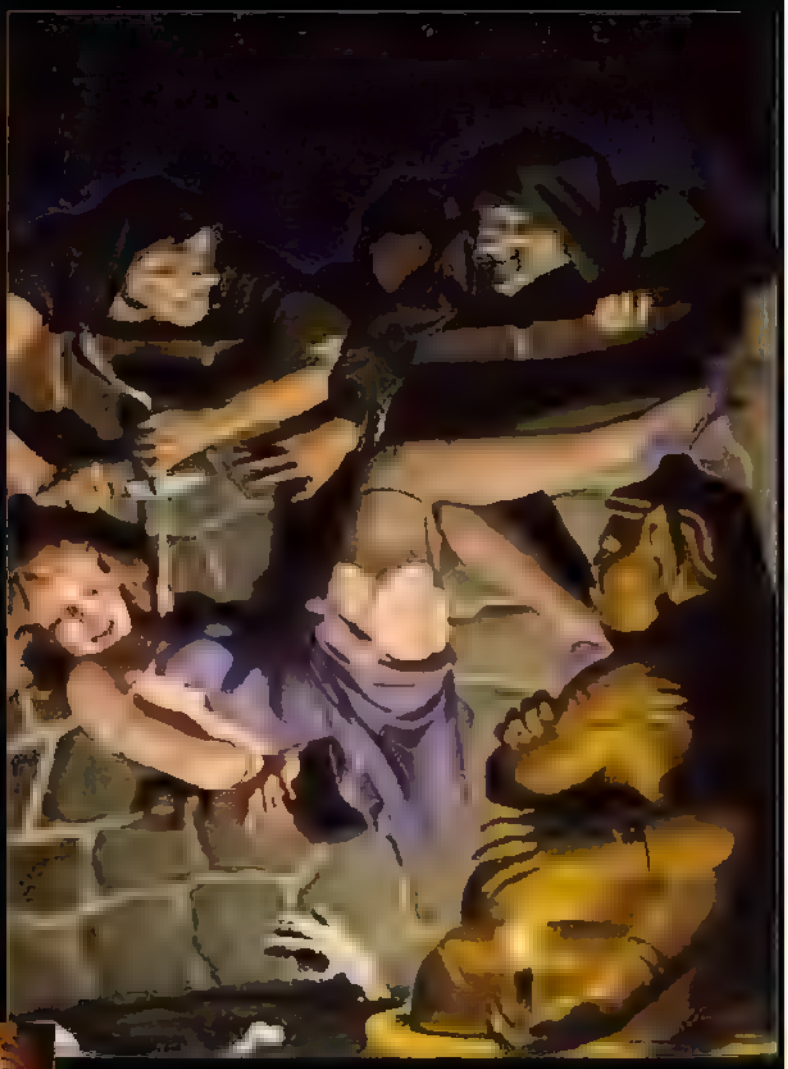
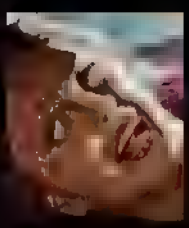


AMERICAN PULP ART

The Robert Lesser Collection

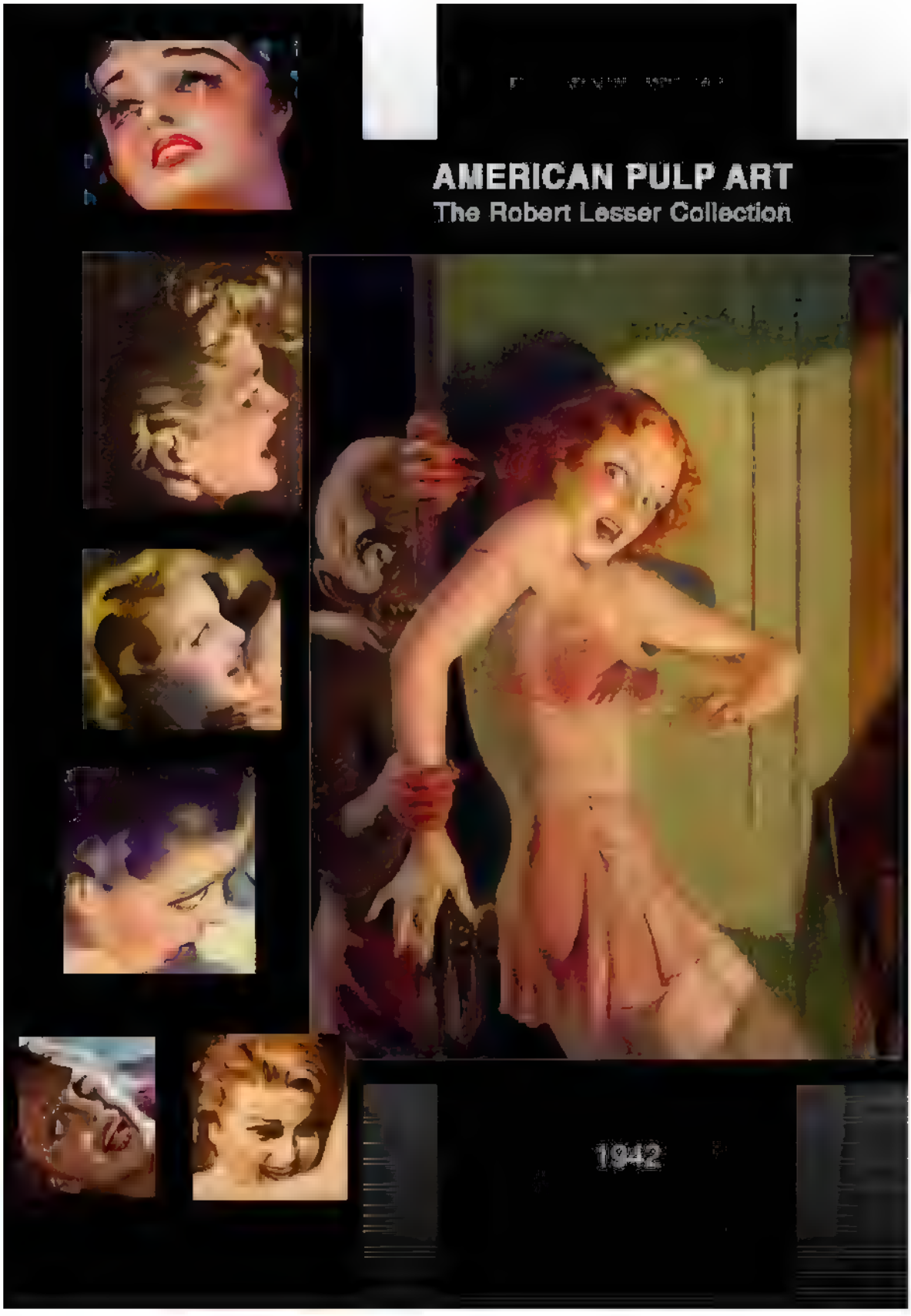




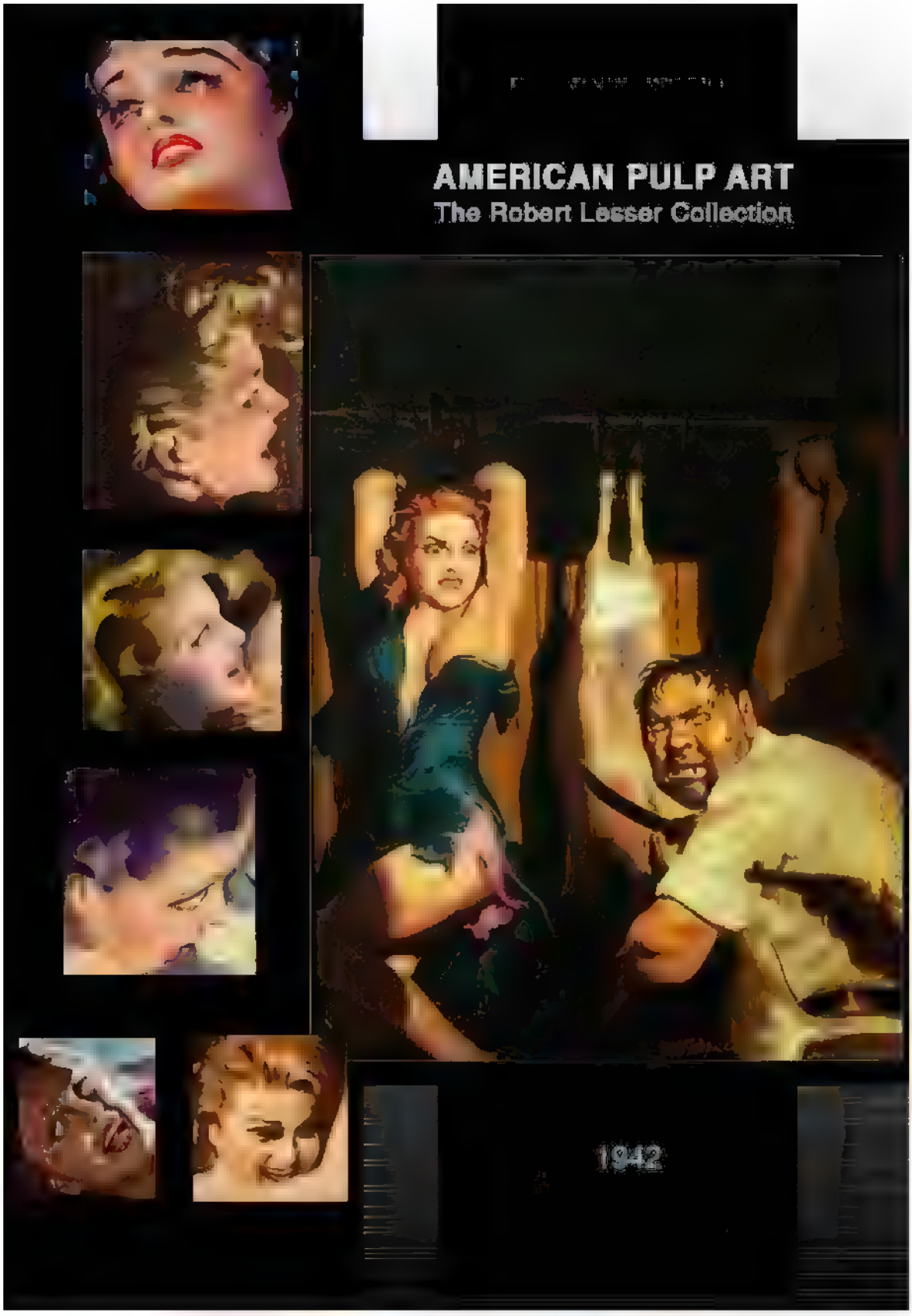


1942

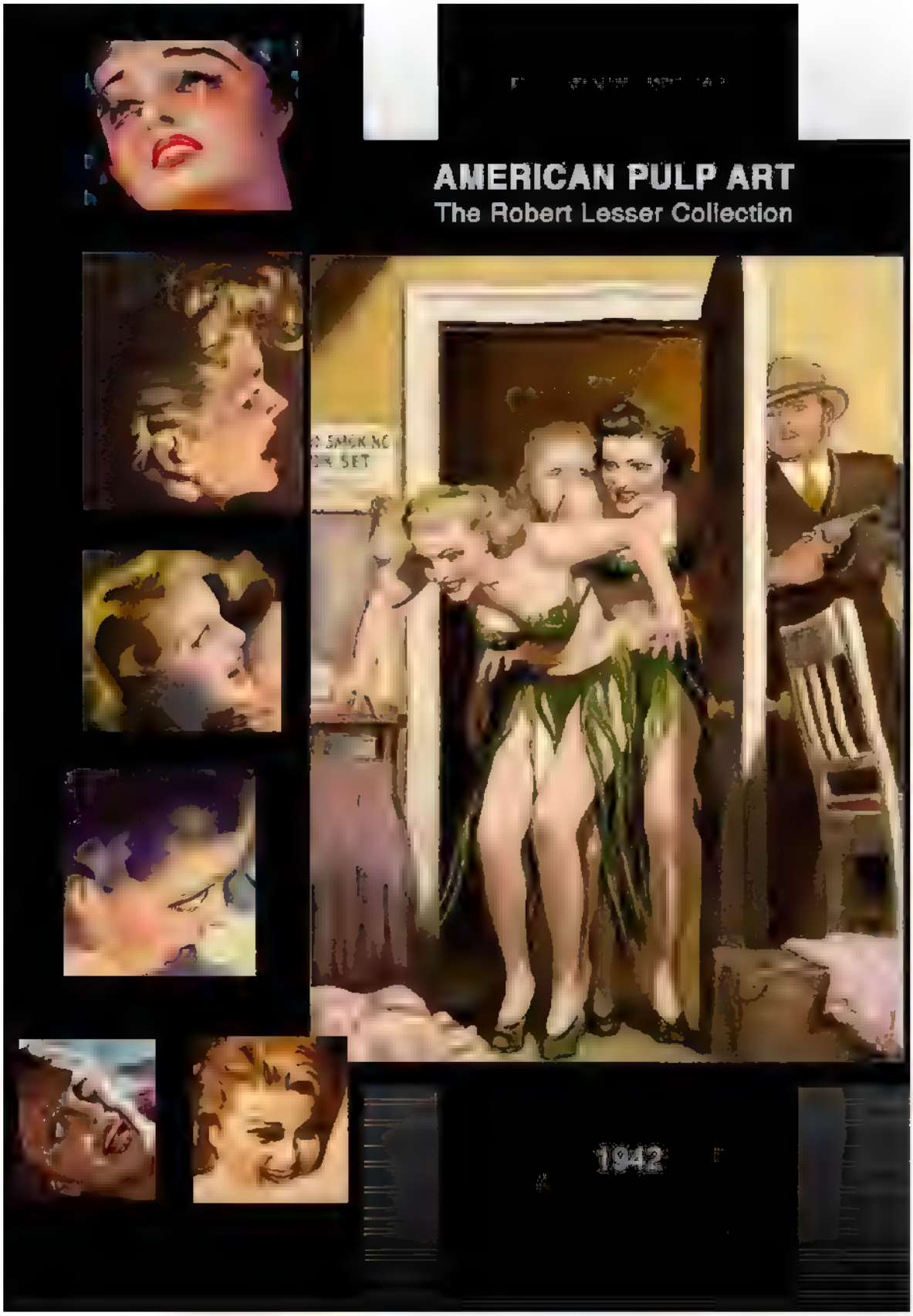
AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
SPICY MYSTERY
25c
MAR
JINX
by
Lew Merrill
1942


AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
1942

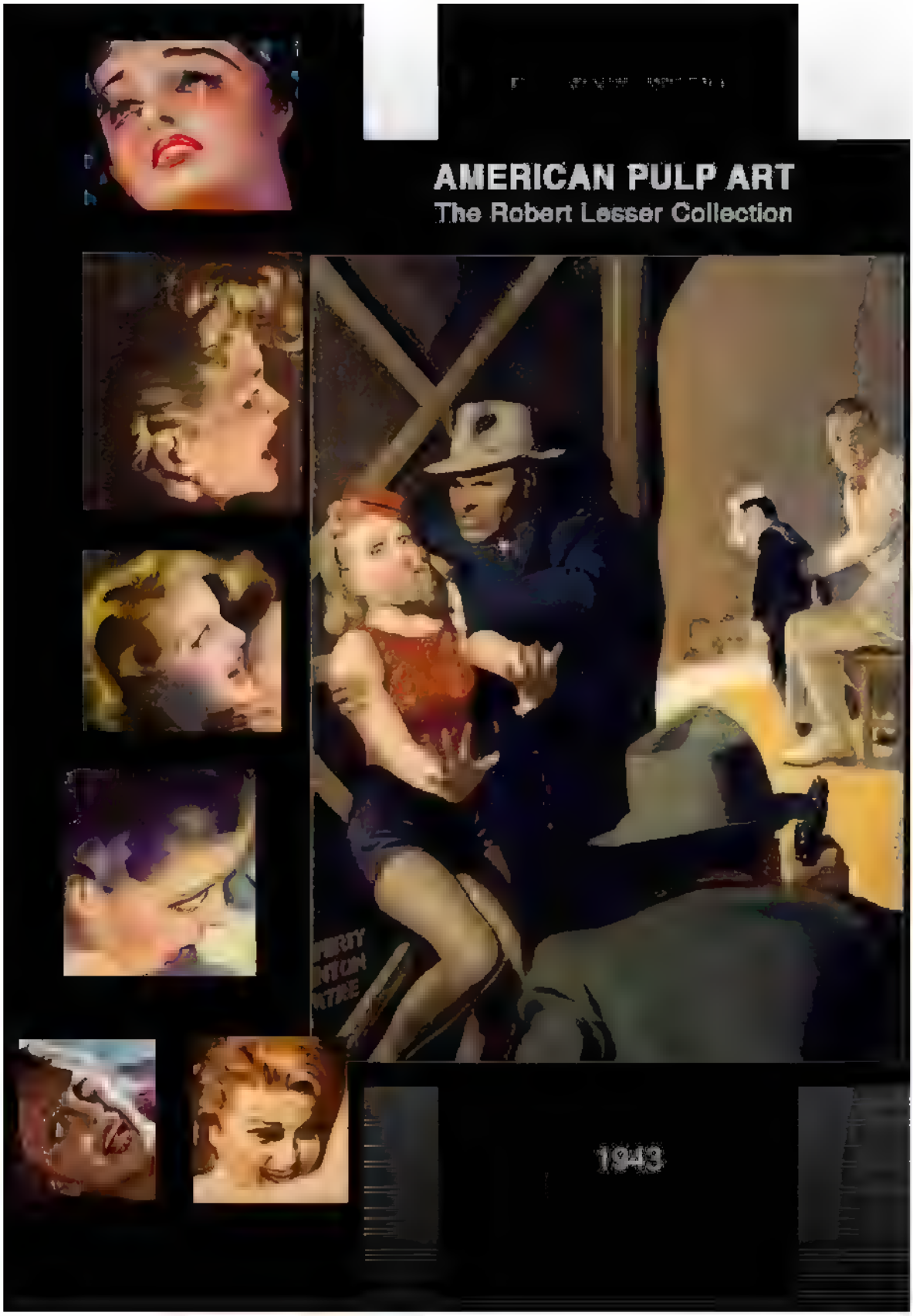
AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
SPICY MYSTERY
STORIES
for
SEPTEMBER
1942

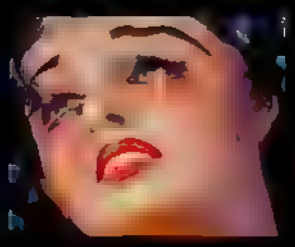

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
1942

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
SPICY MYSTERY
25c
APR
The WHISPERERS
by Justin Case
1942


AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
1942

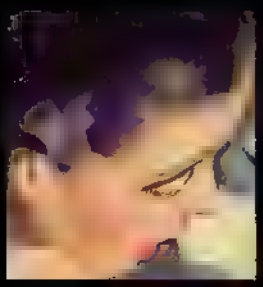
AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
Dan Turner
HOLLYWOOD
DETECTIVE
NO. 3
25¢
Lady Scarface
by
R. L. BELLEM
1942

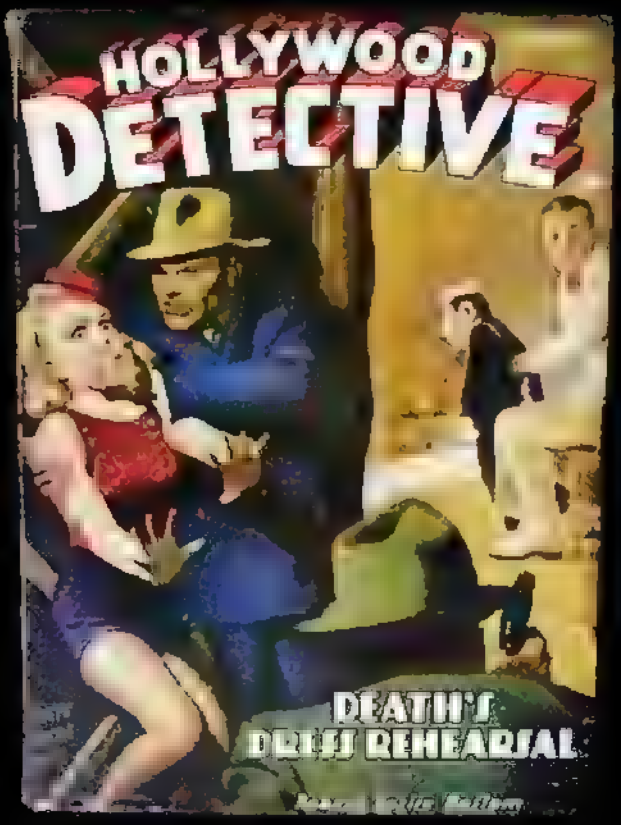

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
1943

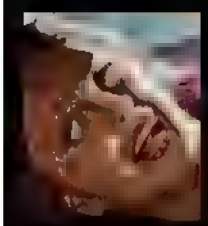


AMERICAN PULP ART

The Robert Lesser Collection



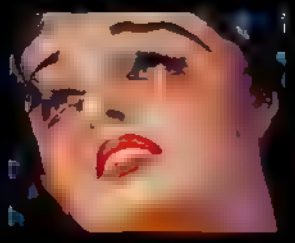


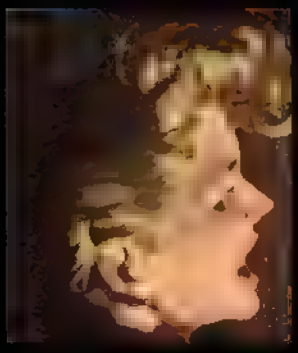


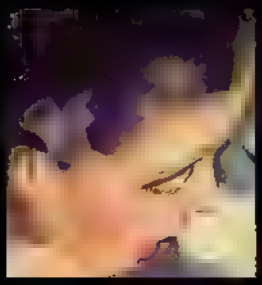
1943

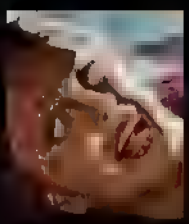
AMERICAN PULP ART

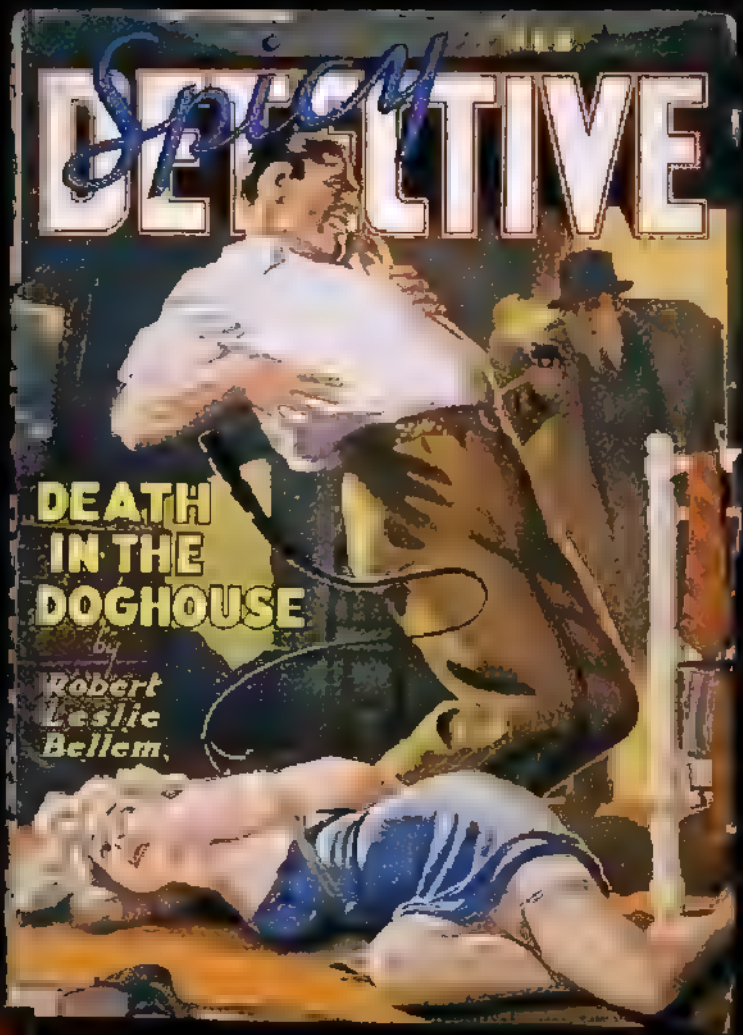
The Robert Lesser Collection







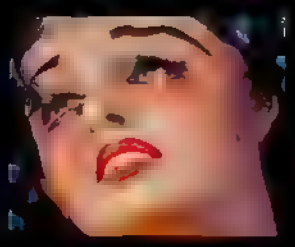


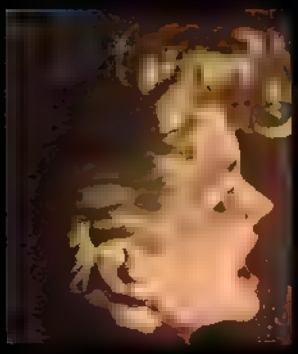


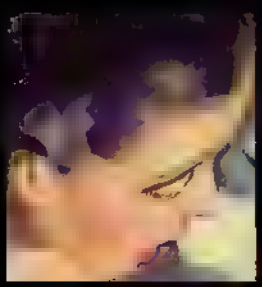
1942

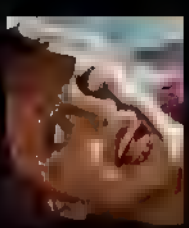
AMERICAN PULP ART

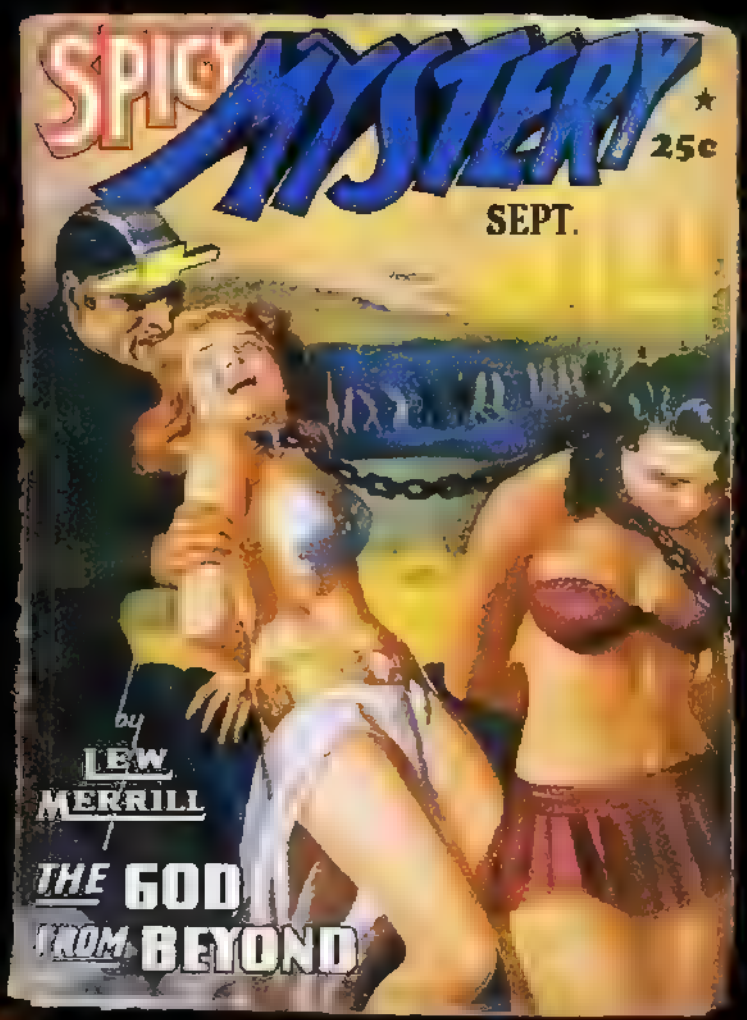
The Robert Lesser Collection











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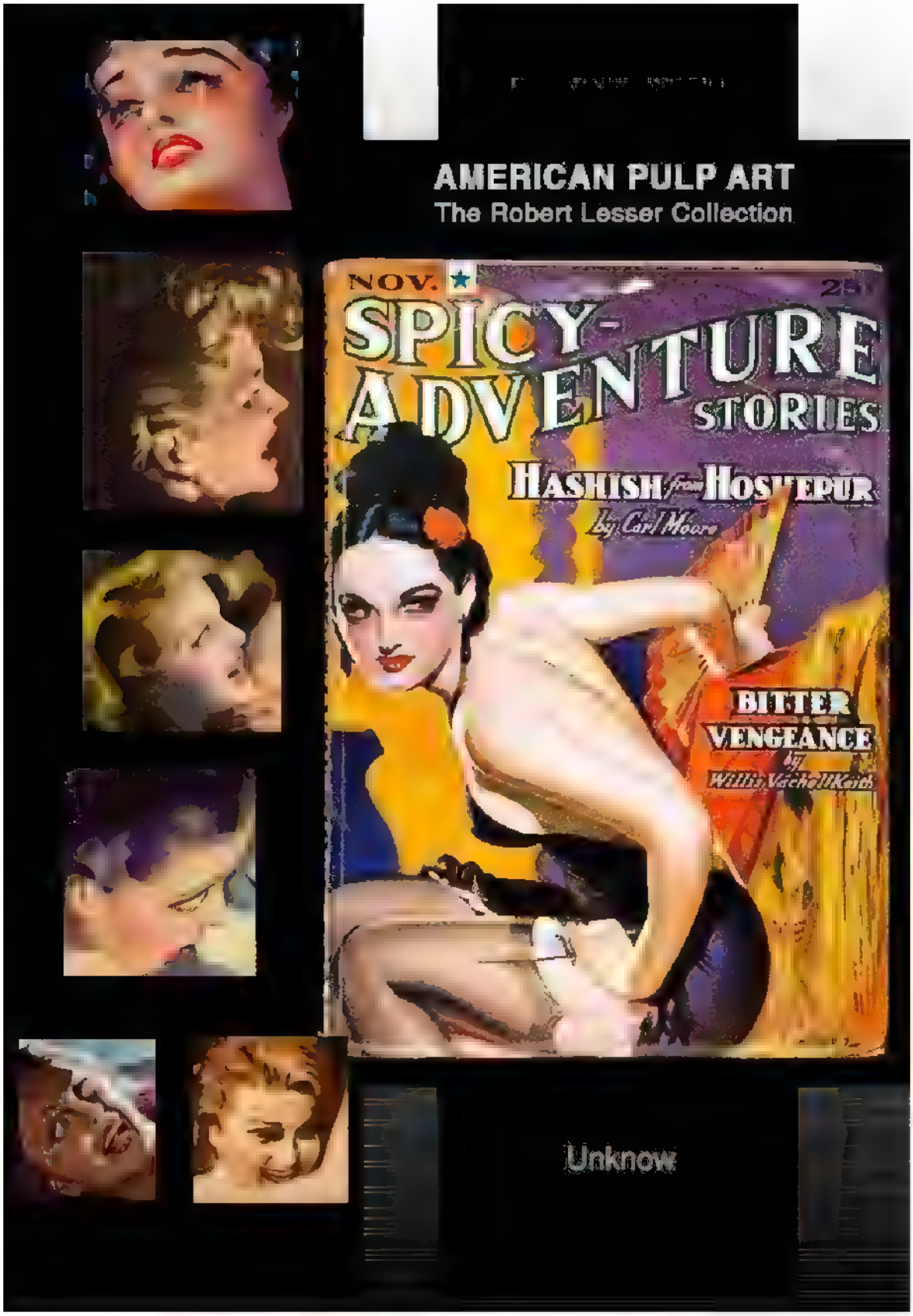
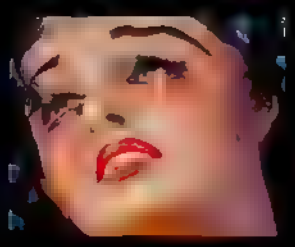
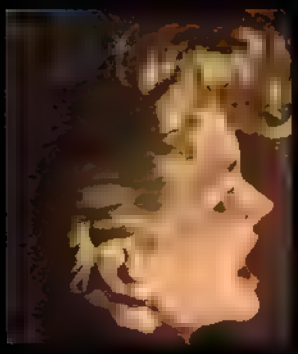
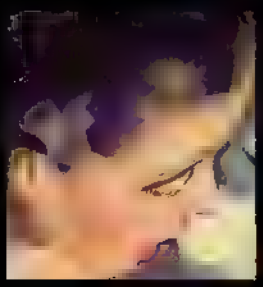

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
NOV.
SPICY-ADVENTURE STORIES
HASHISH from HOSHEPUR
by Carl Moore
BITTER VENGEANCE
by
Willis Vachell Keith
Unknow

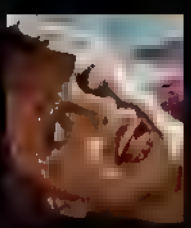
AMERICAN PULP ART

The Robert Lesser Collection









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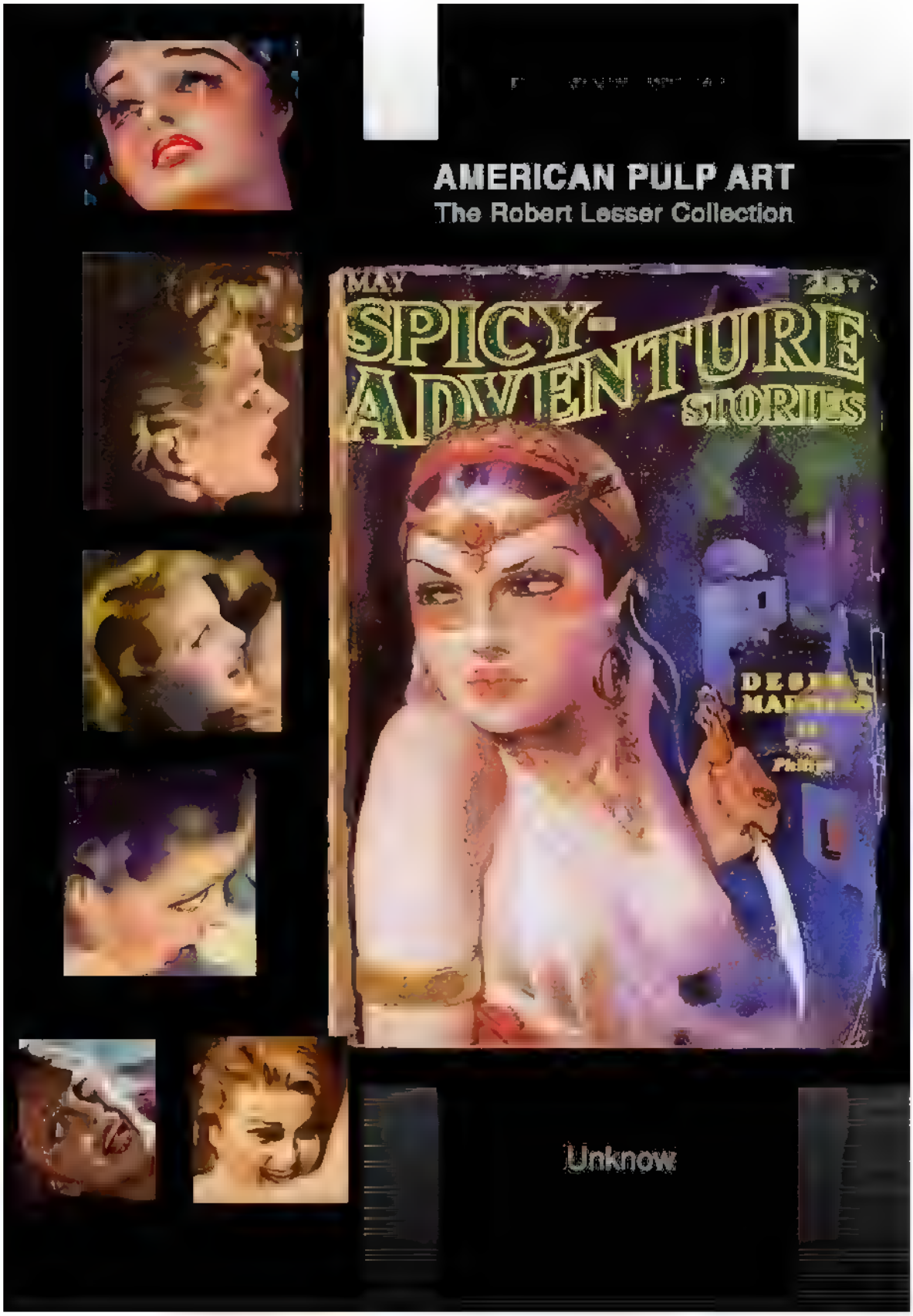
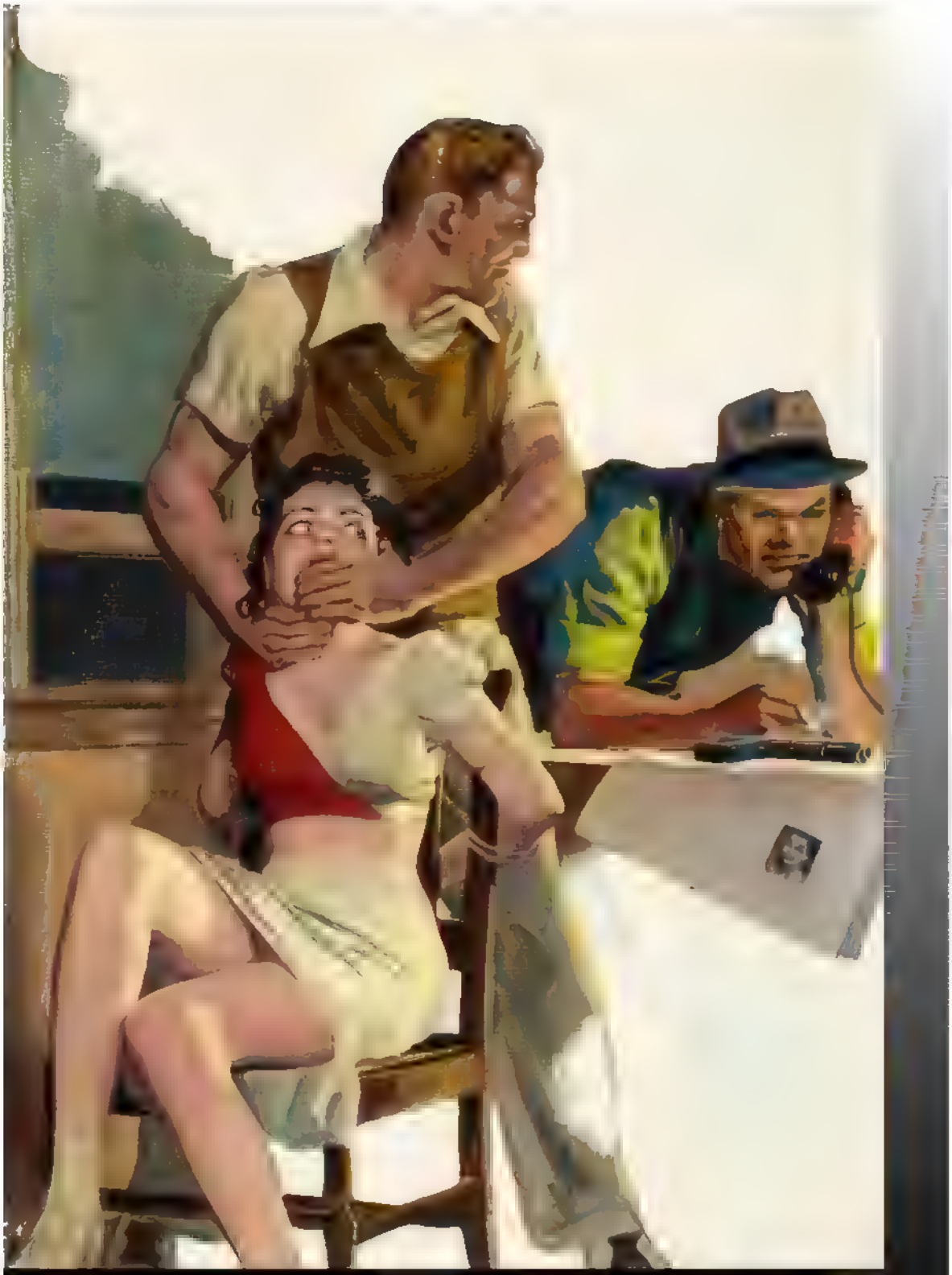
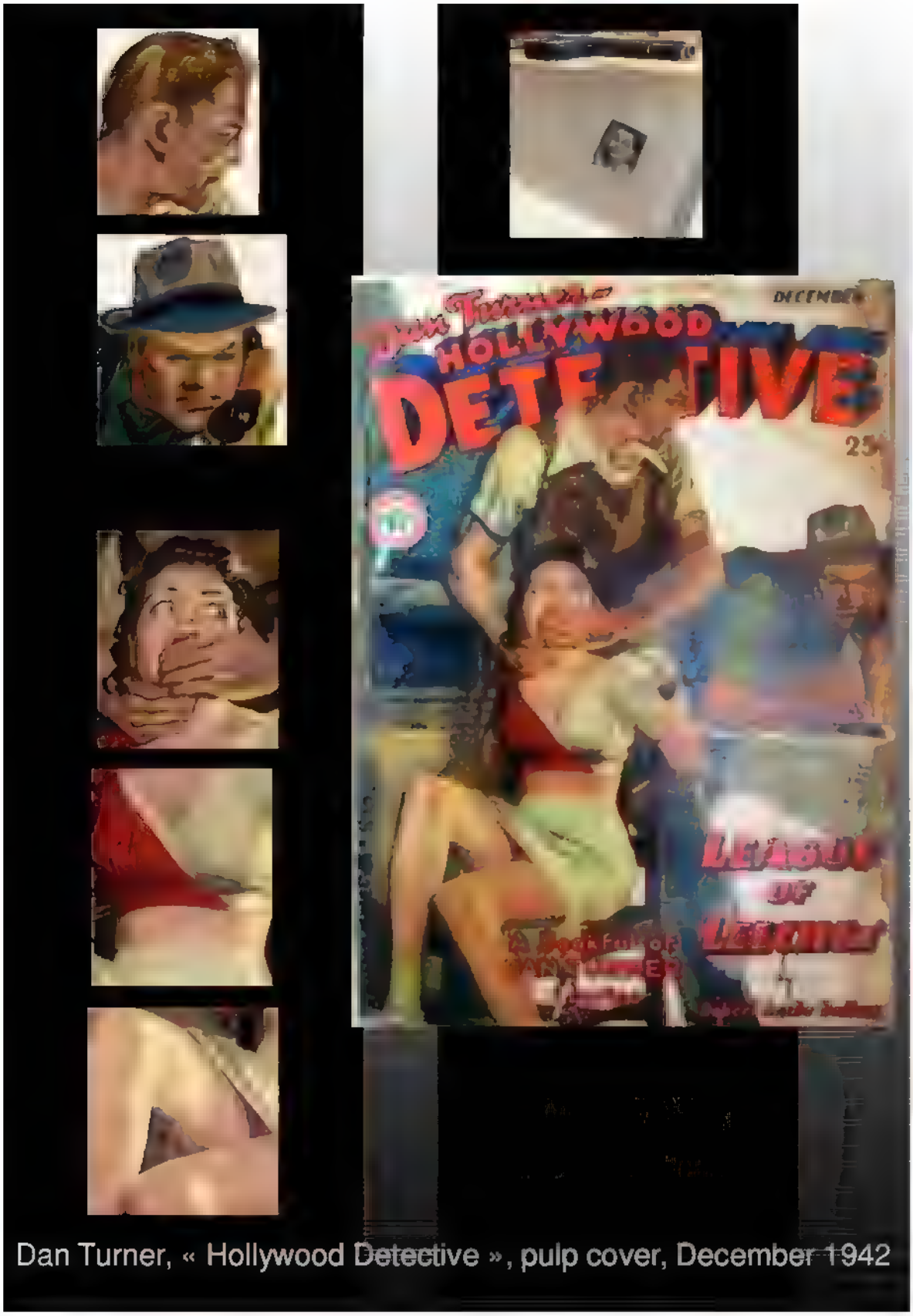

AMERICAN PULP ART
The Robert Lesser Collection
MAY
SPICY-
ADVENTURE
STORIES
Unknow

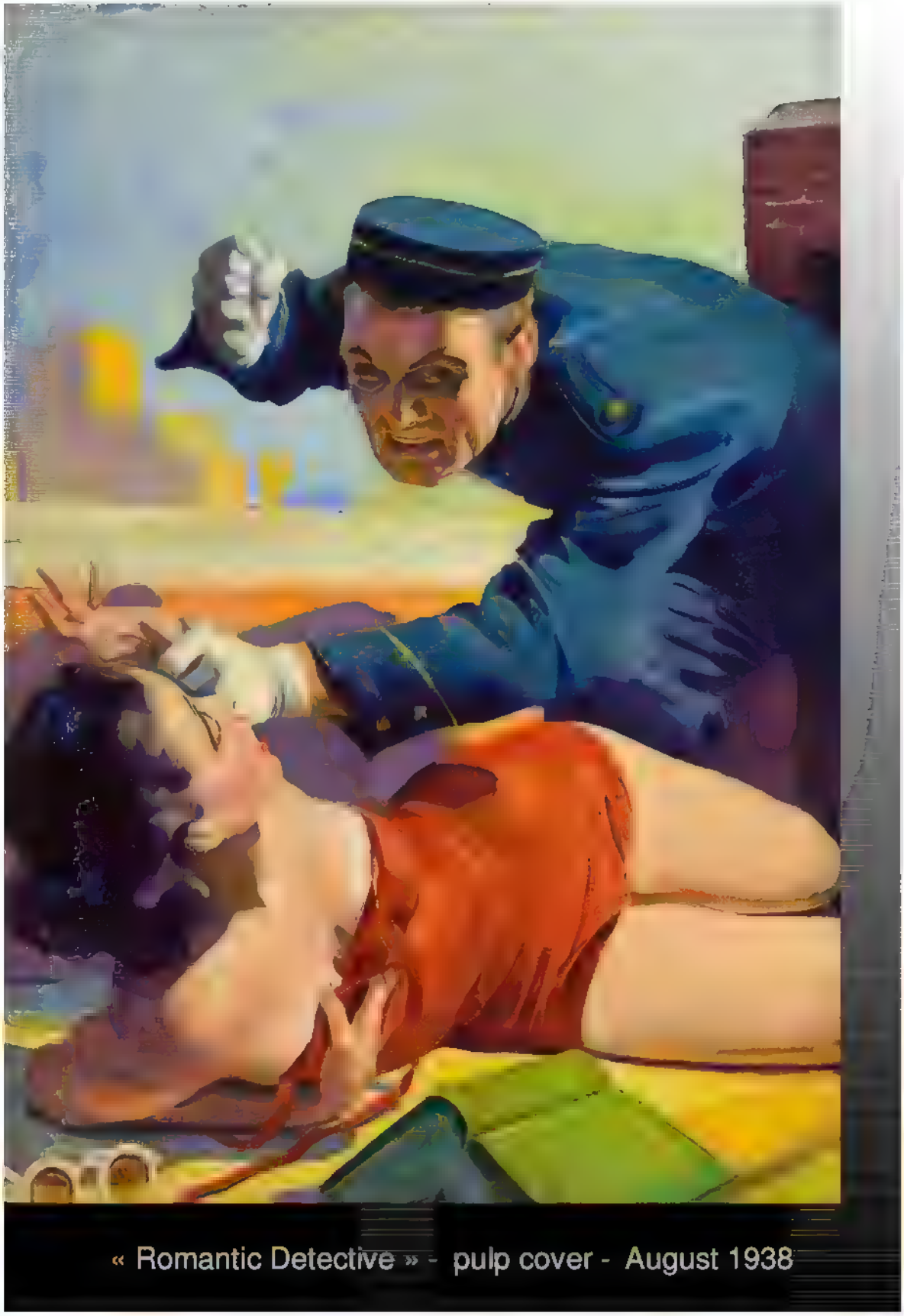
« Private Detective Stories » - June 1937



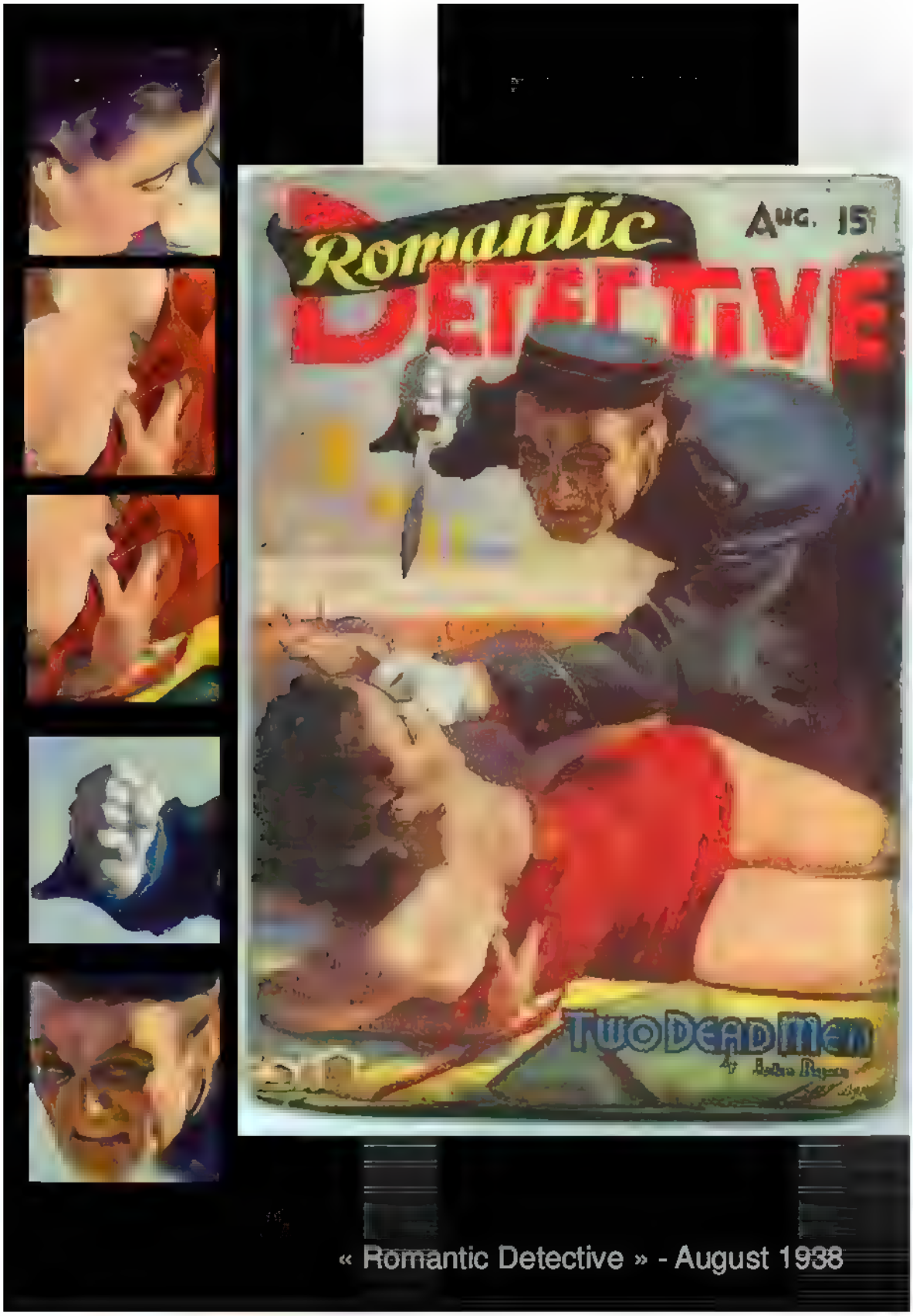
Dan Turner, « Hollywood Detective », pulp cover, December 1942



Dan Turner, « Hollywood Detective », pulp cover, December 1942

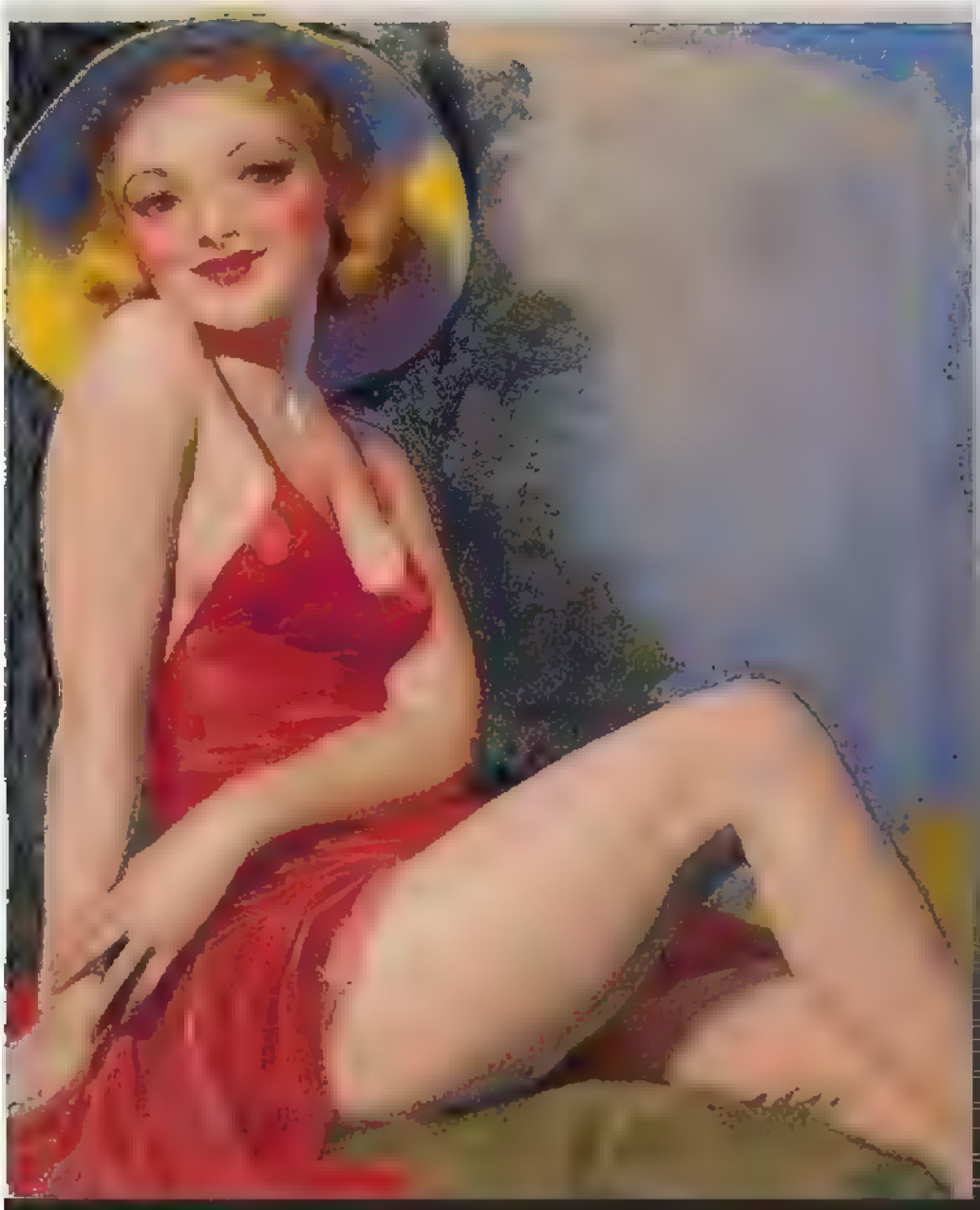


« Romantic Detective » - pulp cover - August 1938

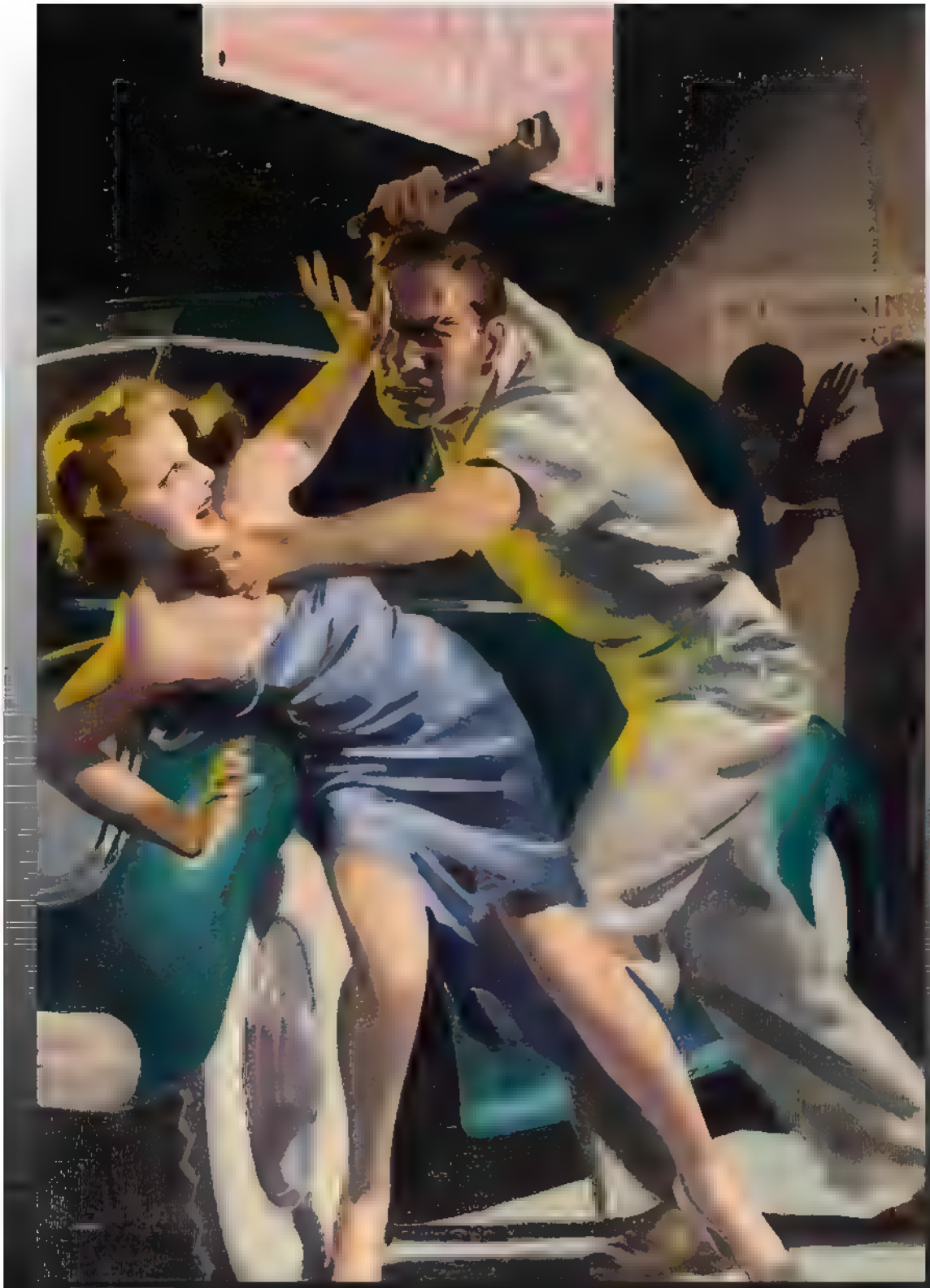


« Romantic Detective » - August 1938

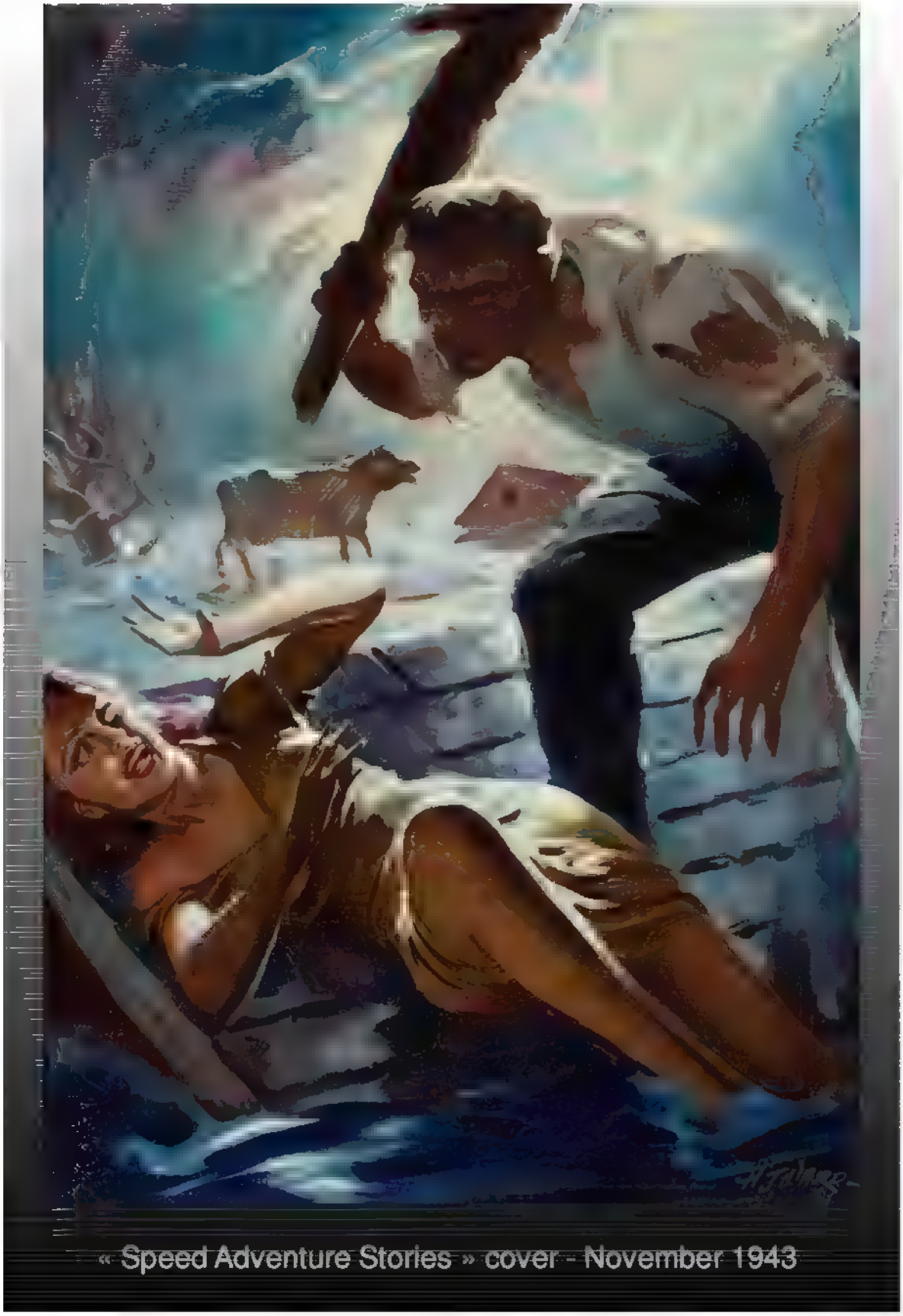
« Private Detective Stories » - July 1937



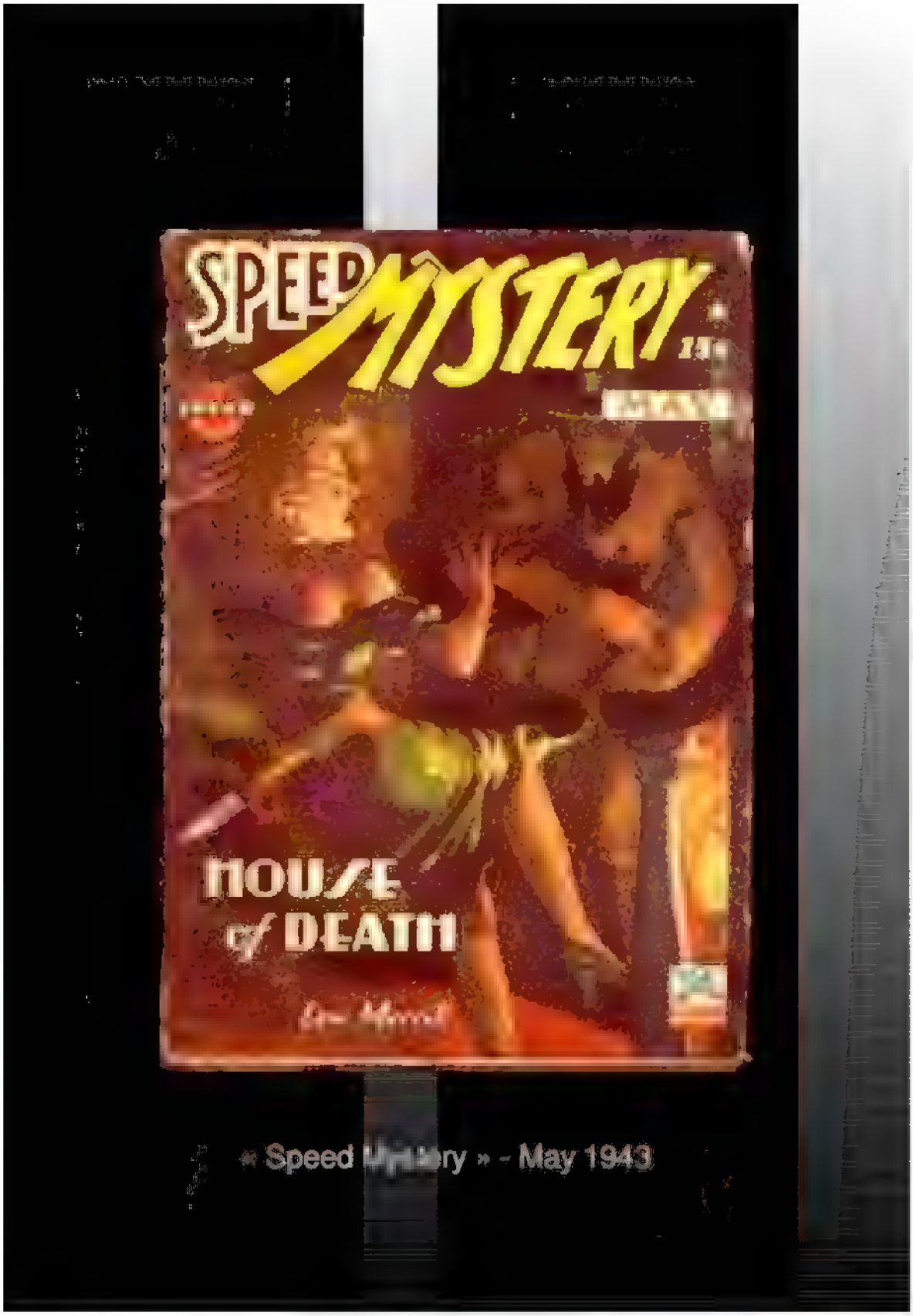
Seated smiling woman in red, sun hat -1938



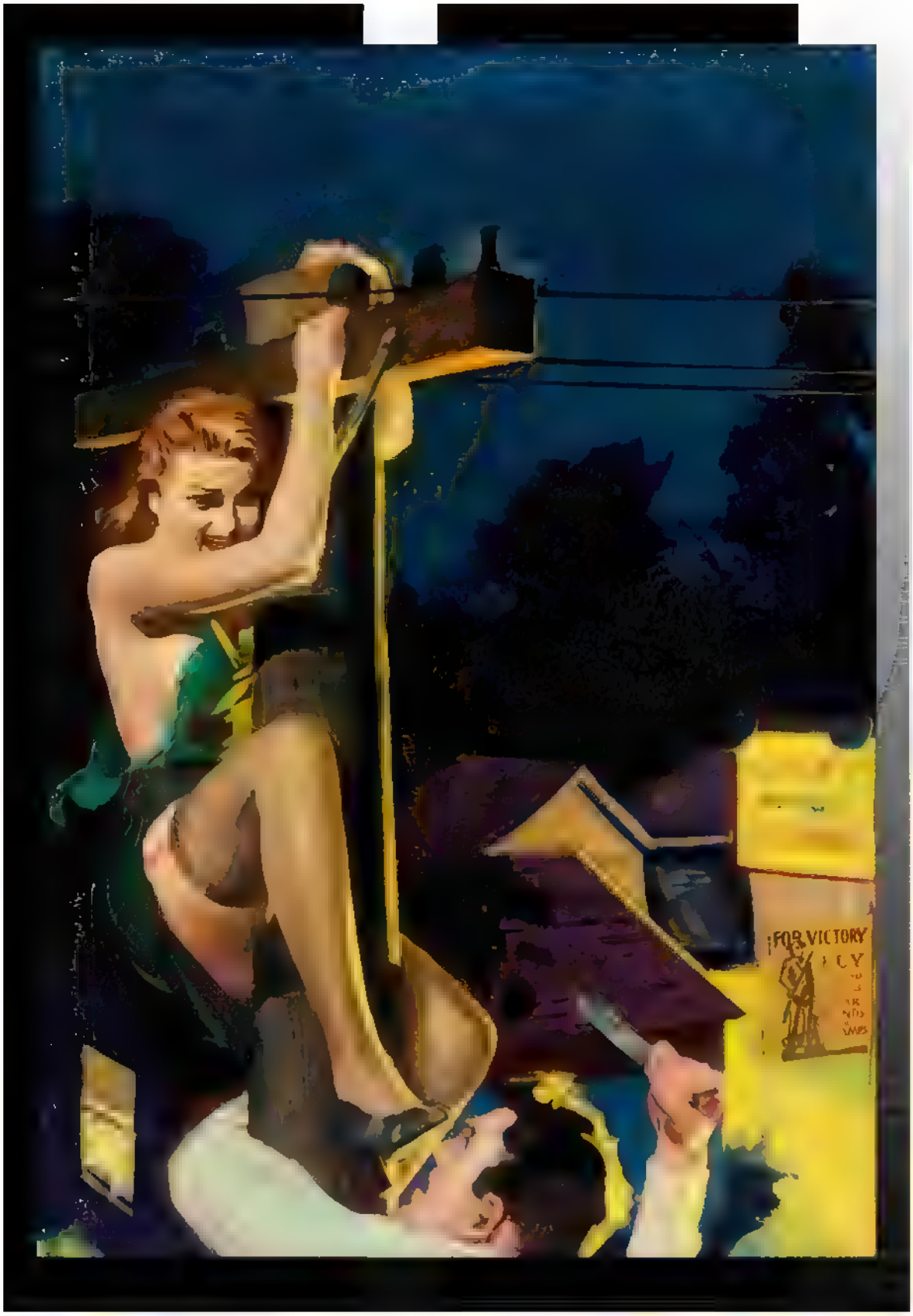
« Private Detective Stories » pulp cover - November 1939



« Speed Adventure Stories » cover - November 1943



« Speed Mystery » - May 1943


FOR VICTORY

« Super Detective »

November 1942

it's one of the absolute best pulp covers that exists, by any artist. Iconic is the adjective that best sums up the entire over-the-top approach that pulps are now celebrated for. As pulp art historian Robert Lesser so vividly recounted about the Ward approach in his book, Pulp Art, Gramercy Books, 1997, "One day in April 1942 Mayor la Guardia spied an unusual Spicy mystery on the newsstand and exploded in instant rage. He ruled on the spot: 'No more Spicy pulps in this city.' H. J. Ward was the cover artist and it was one of his most daring: sexual tension, violence in action, a beautiful woman, all painted with aggressive brushwork to create a cover that couldn't fail to catch the eye."

The Evil Flame, Spicy Mystery Stories pulp cover, August 1936

« Spicy Adventure Stories » - 1935

« Spicy Detective » - February 1935

« Spicy Mystery » - February 1936

« Spicy Mystery » - February 1937

« Private Detective Stories » - Jully 1938

« Spicy Mystery Stories » - 1940

Illustration

ISSUE NUMBER TWENTY-NINE
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The Spring issue, no. 29, of Illustration magazine devotes the full issue to the work of pulp artist Hugh J. Ward. The issue was compiled by pulp historian David Saunders with the help of the Ward family. It contains 96, mostly color, pages interspersing a long biographical essay with cover reproductions and original art from the breadth of his career. Many of the reproductions fill a full page. If you haven't handled a copy of Illustration before, the production standards are very high. It is perfect bound and printed on heavy stock, with superb typography and brilliant color reproduction.